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THE

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(AUTHORISED EDITION),

FOURTH SERIES

THIRD SESSION OF THE TWENTY-EIGHTH PARLIAMENT

OF THE

UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND

8 EDWARD VII.

VOLUME CLXXXVII.

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FIFTH VOLUME OF SESSION.

1908.

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CHRONOLOGY OF "THE PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES."

THE PARLIAMENTARY HISTORY contains all that can be collected of the Legislative History of this country from the Conquest to the close of the XVIIIth Century (1803), 36 vols. The chief sources whence these Debates are derived are the Constitutional History, 24 vols.; Sir Simonds D'Ewes' Journal; Debates of the Commons in 1620 and 1621; Chandler and Timberland's Debates, 22 vols.; Grey's Debates of the Commons, from 1667 to 1694, 10 vols.; Almon's Debates, 24 vols.; Debrett's Debates, 63 vols.; The Hardwicke Papers; Debates in Parliament by Dr. Johnson, &c., &c.

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BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (GOVERNMENT OF IRELAND).

Motion made, and Question put, "That the Proceedings on the Motion relating to the Government of Ireland, if under discussion at Eleven o'clock this night, be not interrupted under the Standing Order (Sittings of the House)."—(*The Chancellor of the Exchequer*).

The House divided; Ayes, 294; Noes, 84. (Division List, No. 58.) ... 112

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GOVERNMENT OF IRELAND.

Mr. John Redmond (*Waterford*) ... 115
Mr. Rainy (*Kilmarnock Burghs*) ... 133

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the present system of Government in Ireland is in opposition to the will of the Irish people and gives them no voice in the management of their own affairs; that the system is consequently inefficient and extravagantly costly; that it does not enjoy the confidence of any section of the population; that it is productive of universal discontent and unrest, and is incapable of satisfactorily promoting the material and intellectual progress of the people; that the reform of Irish Government is a matter vital to the interests of Ireland and calculated greatly to promote the well-being of the people of Great Britain; and, in the opinion of this House, the solution of this problem can only be attained by giving to the Irish people the legislative and executive control of all purely Irish affairs."—(*Mr. John Redmond*).

Earl Percy (*Kensington, S.*) ... 137

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out all the words after the word 'That' in line 1, and to insert the words 'inasmuch as the abandonment by the Imperial Parliament of its undivided responsibility, both for legislation and administration within the United Kingdom, would injure the prosperity of Ireland and imperil the security of Great Britain, this House is unalterably opposed to the creation of an Irish Parliament with a responsible executive.'"—(*Earl Percy*).

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

The Chief Secretary for Ireland (*Mr. Birrell, Bristol, N.*) ... 153
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The Chancellor of the Exchequer (*Mr. Asquith, Fifeshire, E.*) ... 222
Mr. T. M. Healy (*Louth, N.*) ... 228

Question put, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

The House divided:—Ayes, 334; Noes, 142. (Division List No. 59.)

Main Question again proposed.

Mr. Simon (*Essex, Walthamstow*) ... 237

Amendment proposed—

"At the end of the Question to add the words 'subject to the supreme authority of the Imperial Parliament.'"—(*Mr. Simon.*)

Question, "That those words be there added," put, and agreed to.

Main Question, as amended, put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 313; Noes, 157. (Division List No. 60.)

Resolved, That the present system of Government in Ireland is in opposition to the will of the Irish people and gives them no voice in the management of their own affairs; that the system is consequently inefficient add extravagantly costly; that it does not enjoy the confidence of any section of the population; that it is productive of universal discontent and unrest, and is incapable of satisfactorily promoting the material and intellectual progress of the people; that the reform of Irish Government is a matter vital to the interests of Ireland and calculated greatly to promote the well-being of the people of Great Britain; and, in the opinion of this House, the solution of this problem can only be attained by giving to the Irish people the legislative and executive control of all purely Irish affairs, subject to the supreme authority of the Imperial Parliament.

And, it being after half-past Eleven of the Clock on Monday evening, Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House without Question put, pursuant to the Standing Order.

Adjourned at Seven minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS: TUESDAY, 31ST MARCH, 1908.

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Great Western Railway Bill [H.L.].—Reported with Amendments 245

Metropolitan Electric Tramways Bill [H.L.].—Reported from the Select Committee; with Amendments 245

Audenshaw Urban District Council Bill [H.L.]; Merthyr Tydfil Corporation Bill [H.L.].—Read 3^a, and passed, and sent to the Commons 245

Llanelly Gas Bill [H.L.].—Read 3^a, and Amendment made; Bill passed, and sent to the Commons 245

Taff Vale Railway Bill [H.L.]; Fishguard and Rosslare Railways and Harbours Bill [H.L.]; Skegness Urban District Council Bill [H.L.]; North British and Mercantile Insurance Company Bill [H.L.].—Read 3^a, and passed, and sent to the Commons 245

Bury and District Joint Water Board Bill; Dublin and South Eastern Railway Bill; Finchley Urban District Council Bill; Seaham Harbour Dock Bill.—Brought from the Commons, read 1^a, and referred to the Examiners 245

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Patents and Designs Bill [H.L.].—Reported from the Standing Committee without amendment; and to be read 3^a To-morrow... 247

Municipal Representation Bill [H.L.].—Reported from the Standing Committee without further amendment: the Report of the Amendments made in Committee of the Whole House to be received To-morrow 247

Sunday Closing (Shops) Bill [H.L.].—Reported from the Standing Committee with further Amendments; The Report of the Amendments made in Committee of the Whole House and by the Standing Committee to be received on Thursday next, and Bill to be printed as amended 247

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The Under-Secretary of State for War (The Earl of Portsmouth)... ... 247
Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^a."—(*The Earl of Portsmouth*)
On Question, Bill read 2a, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House To-morrow.

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House adjourned at twenty minutes past Seven o'clock, till To-morrow, a quarter past Four o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: TUESDAY, 31ST MARCH, 1908.

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SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).—Sir WILLIAM BRAMPTON GURDON reported from the Committee of Selection; That they had discharged the following Members from Standing Committee A.: Mr. Solicitor-General for Ireland and Dr. Shipman (in respect of the Housing of the Working Classes (Ireland) Bill); and had appointed in substitution (in respect of the Housing of the Working Classes (Ireland) Bill); Mr. Russell and Sir George White.
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The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. Birrell, Bristol, N.) 331

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That leave be given to bring in a Bill to make further provision with respect to University Education in Ireland."—(*Mr. Birrell.*)

Mr. A. J. Balfour (City of London) 354
Mr. Dillon (Mayo, E.) 360
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Mr. Massie (Wiltshire, Cricklade) 387
Mr. William O'Brien (Cork) 389
Mr. Wyndham (Dover) 395
Mr. Charles Craig (Antrim, S.) 396
Sir E. Carson (Dublin University) 399

Question put.

The House divided; Ayes, 307; Noes, 24. (Division List No. 61.)

Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Birrell, Mr. Secretary Haldane, and Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland.

Irish Universities Bill.—"To make further provision with respect to University Education in Ireland," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 184] 403

THE FISCAL QUESTION.

Mr. Mond (Chester) 403
Mr. Russell Rea (Gloucester) 413

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That, in the opinion of this House any attempt to broaden the basis of taxation by placing small import duties on a large number of articles is opposed to all principles of sound finance, wasteful and uneconomical as regards collection, disturbing and harmful to industry and commerce, would tend to raise the price of all taxed articles to consumers, and, in practice, would lead to the imposition of high tariffs of the same character as those in force in protected countries."—(*Mr. Mond.*)

Mr. Hills (Durham) 415
Mr. Harold Cox (Preston) 420
Mr. A. J. Balfour (City of London) 425
The Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Runciman, Dewsbury) ... 438

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 280; Noes, 91. (Division List No. 62.)

Resolved, That, in the opinion of this House, any attempt to broaden the basis of taxation by placing small import duties on a large number of articles is opposed to all principles of sound finance, wasteful and uneconomical as regards collection, disturbing and harmful to industry and commerce, would tend to raise the price of all the taxed articles to consumers, and, in practice, would lead to the imposition of high tariffs of the same character as those in force in protected countries.

Adjourned at a quarter after Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS, WEDNESDAY, 1ST APRIL, 1908.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Honourable Artillery Company.—Petition of the Honourable Artillery Company, under their Common Seal, praying for leave to bring in a Bill to appoint special trustees in regard to certain land and premises of the Honourable Artillery Company, and for other purposes, together with a copy of the proposed Bill annexed thereto; read, and referred to the Examiners 445

Cardiff Railway Bill [H.L.]; Argentine North Eastern Railway Bill [H.L.]; St. Marylebone Borough Council (Superannuation) Bill [H.L.].—Reported, with Amendments 445

Conway and Colwyn Bay Joint Water Board Bill.—Read 2^{a}, and committed: the Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection ... 445

Derby Gas Bill.—Read 2^{u}, and committed 445

Stockport Corporation Bill.—Read 2^{a}, and committed: The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection 445

Pontypridd Water Bill [H.L.].—Read 3^{a}, and passed, and sent to the Commons 445

Aire and Calder Navigation Bill [H.L.]; Great Northern, Piccadilly, and Brompton Railway Bill [H.L.]; Metropolitan District Railway Bill [H.L.]; Rochester Bridge Bill [H.L.]; Stratford-upon-Avon, Towcester, and Midland Junction Railway, Evesham, Redditch, and Stratford-upon-Avon Junction Railway, and East and West Junction Railway (Amalgamation) Bill [H.L.]; Barry Railway Bill [H.L.]; Monmouthshire County Council Bill [H.L.]; Stockport Corporation Bill.—Report from the Committee of Selection, That the following Lords be proposed to the House to form the Select Committee for the consideration of the said Bills; (viz.):—

M. Anglesey,
E. Hardwicke,
L. Dunboyne,
L. Seaton,
L. Newton (*Chairman*);

agreed to; and the said Lords appointed accordingly: The Committee to meet on Tuesday, 12th May next, at Eleven o'clock; and all petitions referred to the Committee, with leave to the petitioners praying to be heard by counsel against the Bills to be heard as desired, as also counsel for the Bills 445

Bristol Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Bristol Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Keighley Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Wath-upon-Dearne Urban District Council Gas Bill [H.L.]; Ravensthorpe Urban District Council Bill [H.L.]; Rhymney and Aber Valleys Gas and Water Bill [H.L.]; Leith Burgh Bill [H.L.]; Ammanford Urban District Council Water Bill [H.L.]; Llanelly and Burry Port Water Board Bill [H.L.]; Conway and Colwyn Bay Joint Water Board Bill—Report from the Committee of Selection, that the following Lords be proposed to the House to form the Select Committee for the consideration of the said Bills, viz:—

E. Carnwath.
E. Verulum.
E. Liverpool.
V. Hill.
L. Ludlow (*Chairman*);

agreed to; and the said Lords appointed accordingly. The Committee to meet on Tuesday, the 12th of May next, at Eleven o'clock; and all petitions referred to the Committee, with leave to the petitioners praying to be heard by counsel against the Bills to be heard as desired, as also counsel for the Bills 446

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Police (Scotland).—Fiftieth Annual Report 447

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Crofters Holdings (Scotland) Acts, 1886–1887.—Report by the Crofters Commission.

Presented [by Command], and ordered to lie on the Table 447

Journal Committee.—Report from, that the One hundred and thirty-ninth Volume of the Journals ordered to lie on the Table; and the said Volume ordered to be delivered in the same manner as the preceding Volumes of the Journal have been delivered 447

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Companies Consolidation Bill [H.L.].—Read 1^a, and to be printed. (No. 44) 447

Movable Dwellings Bill [H.L.] [Second Reading].—Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

Lord Clifford of Chudleigh 447

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^a."—(*Lord Clifford of Chudleigh.*)

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Lord Farrer 452
Earl Russell 454
Lord Allendale 456
Lord Belper 458
Lord Archbishop of Canterbury 459
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Lord Clifford of Chudleigh 463
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The Marquess of Lansdowne 464

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Patents and Designs Bill [H.L.].—Read 3^a (according to order), and passed, and sent to the Commons 466

Municipal Representation Bill [H.L.].—Amendments reported (according to order); and Bill to be read 3^a To-morrow 466

Lotteries and Indecent Advertisements.—The Lords following were named of the Committee—

L. Steward (*E. Beauchamp*).
V. Hutchinson (*E. Donoughmore*).
V. Llandaff.
L. Ramsay (*E. Dalhousie*)
L. Herschell.

Ordered, That such Committee have power to agree with the Committee of the House of Commons in the appointment of a Chairman.

Then a Message was ordered to be sent to the House of Commons to propose that the Joint Committee do meet in the Chairman of Committees' Committee Room on Tuesday next, at Three o'clock. 466

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House adjourned at ten minutes past Six o'clock, till To-morrow, a quarter past Four o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: WEDNESDAY, 1ST APRIL, 1908.

The House met at a quarter before Three of the Clock.

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Dublin and Central Ireland Electric Power Bill.—Reported [Preamble not proved].

Report to lie upon the Table 472

Private Bills (Group D).—Mr. LUKE WHITE reported from the Committee on Group D of Private Bills; That, for the convenience of parties, the Committee had adjourned till Monday next, at half-past Eleven of the Clock.

Report to lie upon the Table 472

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.—That they have passed a Bill, intituled, Audenshaw Urban District Council Bill [Lords].

Also, a Bill, intituled, Merthyr Tydfil Corporation Bill [Lords].

Also, a Bill, intituled, Llanelly Gas Bill [Lords].

Also, a Bill, intituled, Taff Vale Railway Bill [Lords].

Also, a Bill, intituled, Fishguard and Rosslare Railways and Harbours Bill [Lords].

Also, a Bill, intituled, Skegness Urban District Council Bill [Lords].

Also, a Bill, intituled, North British and Mercantile Insurance Company Bill [Lords].

And, also, a Bill, intituled, Pontypridd Water Bill [Lords].

Audenshaw Urban District Council Bill [Lords]; Merthyr Tydfil Corporation Bill [Lords]; Llanelly Gas Bill [Lords]; Taff Vale Railway Bill [Lords]; Fishguard and Rosslare Railways and Harbours Bill [Lords]; Skegness Urban District Council Bill [Lords]; North British and Mercantile Insurance Company Bill [Lords]; Pontypridd Water Bill [Lords].—Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 473

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Licensing Bill.—59 Petitions in favour; to lie upon the Table 474

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Moray Firth (Illegal Trawling).—Petition for Prevention; to lie upon the Table 474

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Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday Bill.—2 Petitions in favour; to lie upon the Table 475

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Trade Reports (Annual Series).—Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 3965 and 3966; to lie upon the Table 475

Police (Scotland).—Fiftieth Annual Report; to lie upon the Table 475

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Irish Land Purchase ... 519
Licensing Reduction Schemes ... 519
Imports of Tobacco Samples ... 520
The Housing Bill ... 521

Port of London Bill.—Copy ordered, "of Memorandum in reference to the Port of London Bill."—(*Mr. Lloyd-George.*)

Copy presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 109] ... 521

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Incest Bill.—Reported, with an Amendment, from Standing Committee A.

Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 110.]

Minutes of the Proceedings of the Standing Committee to be printed [No. 110.]

Bill, as amended (in the Standing Committee), to be taken into consideration upon Friday, and to be printed. [Bill 185] 521

Local Authorities (Admission of the Press) Bill.—Reported, with Amendments, from Standing Committee A.

Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 111.]

Minutes of the Proceedings of the Standing Committee to be printed. [No. 111.]

Bill, as amended (by the Standing Committee), to be taken into consideration upon Friday, 26th June, and to be printed. [Bill 186] ... 521

CHAIRMEN'S PANEL—Mr. STUART-WORTLEY reported from the Chairmen's Panel that they had appointed Mr. Laurence Hardy to be Chairman of Standing Committee B, and Mr. John William Wilson to be Chairman of Standing Committe C.

Report to lie upon the Table.

Leave given to the Chairmen's Panel to make a Special Report.

Special Report brought up, and read.

Special Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 112.]

Minutes of Proceedings to be printed. [No. 112] 522

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES.)—Sir WILLIAM BRAMPTON GURDON reported from the Committee of Selection; That they had discharged the following Members from Standing Committee A: Mr. Carlile and Sir Francis Lowe; and had appointed in substitution (in respect of the Agricultural Education in Elementary Schools Bill): Viscount Morpeth and Sir Philip Magnus.

Report to lie upon the Table 522

Trusts Bill.—The Select Committee on the Trusts Bill was nominated of:—Mr. Beale, Mr. Clancy, Mr. Cave, Dr. Hazel, Mr. Hills, Mr. Micklem, Mr. John O'Connor, Mr. Radford, Mr. Rendall, Mr. Stewart Smith, and Mr. Salter.

Ordered, "That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records."

Ordered, "That Three be the quorum."—(*Mr. Whiteley*) 522

PROSECUTION OF OFFENCES (AMENDMENT) (EXPENSES).—Resolution reported,—"That it is expedient to authorise the payment out of moneys provided by Parliament of the salaries and remuneration of the Director of Public Prosecutions and assistant directors appointed under any Act of the present session to amend the Prosecution of Offences Act, 1879 and 1884, and of the Expenses incurred in pursuance of such Act."

Resolution read a second time.

Sir F. Banbury (*City of London*) 523

Amendment proposed—

"At the end of the Resolution to add the words 'such salaries not to exceed £3,000 in all.'"—(*Sir F. Banbury*).

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

The Attorney General (*Sir W. Robson, South Shields*) 527
Lord Barcarres (*Lancashire, Chorley*) 529
Captain Craig (*Down, E.*) 530
Mr. Cochrane (*Ayrshire, N.*) 533
Mr. Claude Hay (*Shoreditch, Hoxton*) 534

Question put.

The House divided: Ayes, 70; Noes, 272. (Division List No. 63.)

Resolution agreed to.

Prosecution of Offences (Amendment) Bill.—Order for Committee read.

The Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence, owing to indisposition, of the Chairman of Ways and Means.

Considered in Committee.

[Mr. CALDWELL (Lanarkshire, Mid.) in the Chair.]

Clause 1:

Mr. Claude Hay 539

Amendment proposed—

"In page 1, line 6, to leave out from '1884' to the word 'shall,' in line 7."—*Mr. Claude Hay.*

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the clause."

Sir F. Banbury 542
Captain Craig 543
Mr. Claude Hay 543
Viscount Helmsley (*Yorkshire, N.R., Thirsk*) 544
The Parliamentary Secretary to the Treasury (*Mr. George Whiteley, Yorkshire, W.R., Pudsey*) 545
Sir F. Banbury 545

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Sir F. Banbury.*)

Mr. Claude Hay 546
Captain Craig 546
Sir W. Robson 546
Mr. Rawlinson (*Cambridge University*) 546
Sir F. Banbury 547
Mr. Claude Hay 548

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Original Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 282; Noes, 71. (Division List No. 64).

Sir F. Banbury 551

Amendment proposed—

"In page 1, line 11, to leave out from the word 'appoint' to end of the subsection, in order to insert the words 'with the sanction of the Treasury one Assistant Director.'"—(*Sir F. Banbury.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the clause."

Sir W. Robson 552
Mr. George Faber 553
Mr. Claude Hay 554
Sir W. Robson 554

Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 294 ; Noes, 65. (Division List No. 65.)

Bill reported, without Amendment ; to be read the third time To-morrow.

Cost in Criminal Cases Bill.—Order for second Reading read.

The Solicitor-General (*Sir Samuel Evans, Glamorganshire, Mid.*) ... 557

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*The Solicitor-General.*)

Mr. Rawlinson 559
Mr. George Faber 560
Viscount Helmsley 560

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed to a Standing Committee.

Children Bill.—Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [24th March], "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Question again proposed.

Mr. Guinness (*Bury St. Edmunds*) 561
Mr. Gulland (*Dumfries Burghs*) 568
Mr. Cochrane (*Aryshire, N.*) 572
Mr. Maclean (*Bath*) 576
Mr. Summberbell (*Sunderland*) 580
Mr. Bramsdon (*Portsmouth*) 582
Viscount Morpeth (*Birmingham*) 582
Mr. Bright (*Oldham*) 586
Sir Henry Craik (*Glasgow and Aberdeen Universities*) 587
Mr. L. Haslam (*Monmouth Boroughs*) 589
Lord Edmund Talbot (*Sussex, Chichester*) 589

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed to a Standing Committeee.

EXPLOSION (GLENAHIERY).

Mr. Haviland Burke (*King's County, Tullamore*)... 590
Mr. Power (*Waterford, E.*) 599

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That, in the opinion of this House, the interests of truth and justice require a full public inquiry upon oath into all the circumstances connected with the explosion at Lord Ashtown's shooting lodge at Glenahiery on 14th August last, including the subsequent attempt made to incite a number of the inhabitants of the county of Galway to commit an outrage upon Woodlawn Church on 31st August last."—(*Mr. Haviland Burke.*)

Mr. Moore (*Armagh, N.*) 603
Mr. Charles Craig (*Antrim, S.*) 616

Amendment proposed—

"In line 4, after the word 'last,' to insert the words 'including the action of the police authorities, and all the circumstances connected with the preparation, contents, and circulation of the police reports and of the statement of the 11th September, 1907, signed by District Inspector Preston relating thereto, and.' "—(*Mr. Moore*).

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

The Attorney-General for Ireland (*Mr. Cherry, Liverpool Exchange*) ... 621
Mr. Walter Long (*Dublin, S.*) 625

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Main Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 110; Noes, 137. (Division List No. 66.)

Ferries (Ireland) Bill.—Read a second time, and committed to a Standing Committee 627

CHILDREN [EXPENSES].—Committee to consider of authorising the payment out of moneys provided by Parliament of any expenses incurred under any Act of the present session to consolidate and amend the Law relating to the Protection of Children and Young Persons (King's Recommendation signified), To-morrow.—(*Mr. Pease.*) 627

LOTTERIES AND ADVERTISEMENTS.—Lords Message [25th March], relating to the appointment of a Joint Committee on Lotteries and Advertisements, considered.

Ordered, That a Select Committee of Five Members be appointed to join with a Committee to be appointed by the Lords to inquire into the law:—(1) as to lotteries, including the sale of lottery bonds, competitions for prizes which involve an element of chance, and advertisements relating thereto; (2) as to indecent literature and pictures and advertisements relating to things indecent or immoral; and to report what amendments, if any, in the law are necessary or desirable.

The Committee was accordingly nominated of:—Mr. Beckett, Mr. Herbert Craig, Mr. Hastings Duncan, Mr. O'Malley and Mr. Henry Joseph Wilson.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That Three be the quorum.

Message to the Lords to acquaint them therewith.—(*Mr. George Whiteley*) 628

DUBLIN STEAMBOAT SERVICE.—Motion made and Question proposed, "That the House do now adjourn."

Mr. Clancy (Dublin County, N.) 629
Mr. Mooney (Newry) 630
Mr. T. M. Healy (Louth, N.) 630
The Postmaster General (Mr. Sydney Buxton, Tower Hamlets, Poplar) ... 631

Question put, and agreed to.

House adjourned at twenty-nine minutes after Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS: THURSDAY, 2ND APRIL, 1908.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Tramways Order Confirmation (No. 1) Bill [H.L.].—Committed 633

Bromley and Crays Gas Bill; Glyncorrwg Urban District Council Bill; Lincoln Corporation Bill.—Brought from the Commons, read 1ª, and referred to the Examiners 633

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill [H.L.].—Read 2ª (according to Order) 633

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Bristol Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Bristol Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Keighley Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Wath-upon-Dearne Urban District Council Gas Bill [H.L.]; Ravensthorpe Urban District Council Bill [H.L.]; Rhymney and Aber Valleys Gas and Water Bill [H.L.]; Leith Burgh Bill [H.L.]; Ammanford Urban District Council Water Bill [H.L.]; Llanelly and Burry Port Water Board Bill [H.L.]; Conway and Colwyn Bay Joint Water Board Bill.—Report from the Committee of Selection, that the Earl of Albemarle be proposed to the House as a Member of the Select Committee on the said Bills in the place of the Earl of Verulam; read, and agreed to 633

PETITIONS.

Land Values (Scotland) Bill.—Petition against.
The Earl of Camperdown 633
Ordered to lie on the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, &c.

Lotteries and Indecent Advertisements.—Message from the Commons that they have appointed a Committee to consist of Five Members to join with a Committee of this House to consider the said subject, and request this House to appoint an equal number of Lords to be joined with the Members of their House 634

Trade Reports; Annual Series.—No. 3967. Finances of Denmark.
Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table 634

Universities (Scotland) Act, 1889.—Annual Report on the state of the finances of the University of Glasgow 634

Superannuation.—Treasury Minute.
Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table 634

Universities (Scotland) Act, 1889.—University Court Ordinances:—
No. 24. (Aberdeen, No. 2) Regulations for Degrees in Arts.
No. 25. (Aberdeen, No. 3) Regulations as to Bursaries, etc.
Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and to be printed. (No. 45) 635

Small Holdings and Allotments (Scotland) Bill [H.L.]
House in Committee (according to Order).
[The Earl of ONSLOW in the Chair.]
Clauses 1 to 26 agreed to.
Clause 27:
Lord Saltoun 635
Amendment moved—
"In page 18, line 32, after the word 'like,' to insert the words 'or being land used for drying or repairing fishing nets.'"—(*Lord Saltoun.*)
The Earl of Camperdown 635
On Question, Amendment agreed to.
Clause 27, as amended, agreed to.
Remaining Clauses agreed to, and Bill reported with an Amendment to the House and recommitted to the Standing Committee, and to be printed as amended. (No. 46.)

Page

Sunday Closing (Shops) Bill [H.L.].—Amendments reported (according to Order); and Bill to be read 3^{a} on Tuesday next 635

Post Office Consolidation Bill [H.L.]. [SECOND READING.]—Order of the day for the Second Reading read.
The Earl of Granard 636
Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^{a}."—(*The Earl of Granard.*)
On Question, Bill read 2^{a}, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Tuesday next.

Municipal Representation Bill [H.L.]—Read 3^{a} (according to order), and passed and sent to the Commons 636

County Courts Bill [H.L.]. [SECOND READING.]—Order of the day for the Second Reading read.
The Lord Chancellor (*Lord Loreburn*) 636
Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^{a}."—(*The Lord Chancellor.*)
Lord Ashbourne 637
On Question, Bill read 2^{a}, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House.

House adjourned at twenty minutes before Five o'clock, till To-morrow, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS, THURSDAY, 2ND APRIL, 1908.

The House met at a quarter before Three of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Bromley and Crays Gas Bill; Glyncorrwg Urban District Council Bill; Lincoln Corporation Bill.—Read the third time, and passed 638

Dover Graving Docks Bill; Louth and East Coast Railway (Transfer) Bill; Dundalk Urban District Council Bill.—Reported, with Amendments; Reports to lie on the Table, and to be printed 638

Knott End Railway Bill.—Reported, with Amendments [Title amended]; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 638

Herne Bay Pier Bill [LORDS].—Reported, without Amendment; Report to lie upon the Table.
Bill to be read a third time 638

Private Bills (Group E).—Colonel SEELY reported from the Committee on Group E of Private Bills; That, for the convenience of parties, the Committee had adjourned till Monday next, at Twelve of the Clock.
Report to lie upon the Table 638

PETITIONS.

Coal Mines (Eight Hours) (No. 2) Bill.—2 Petitions against; to lie upon the Table 638

Earl, William Robert Albert.—Petition for redress of grievances; to lie upon the Table 638

Elementary Education (England and Wales) Bill.—Petitions against; to lie upon the Table 638

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Elementary Education (England and Wales) Bill.—2 Petitions in favour; to lie upon the Table 639

Licensing Bill.—45 Petitions against; to lie upon the Table. 6 Petitions for alteration; to lie upon the Table. 75 Petitions in favour; to lie upon the Table 639

Licensing Bill and Liquor Traffic (Local Option) (Scotland) Bill.—Petition in favour; to lie upon the Table 639

Liquor Traffic (Local Option) (Scotland) Bill.—Petition in favour; to lie upon the Table 639

Outdoor Relief Friendly Societies Acts, 1894 and 1904.—Petitions for extension to Scotland; to lie upon the Table... 639

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday Bill.—Petition in favour; to lie upon the Table 640

Shop Bills.—Petition against; to lie upon the Table 640

RETURNS, REPORTS, &c.

Crown's Nominee Account.—Abstract Account; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 113] 640

Superannuation Acts, 1884.—Treasury Minute; to lie upon the Table ... 640

Trade Reports (Annual Series).—Diplomatic and Consular Report, Annual Series, No. 3967; to lie upon the Table 640

Universities (Scotland) Act, 1889 (Ordinance).—University Court Ordinance No. XXIV; to lie upon the Table and to be printed. [No. 114] 640

Universities (Scotland) Act, 1889 (Ordinance).—University Court Ordinance No. XXV. (Aberdeen No. 3); to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 115] 640

University of Glasgow.—Abstract of Accounts of the University of Glasgow; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 116] 641

Paper laid on the Table by the Clerk of the House.—Copy of the Criminal Appeal Rules, 1908 641

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

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Sale of Intoxicants in Parliament Buildings 699
Clerks to Surveyors of Taxes 700
Import Duties 700
Elementary Education (England and Wales) Bill 700
Mail Steamers at Kingstown 701
Business of the House 705

COMMITTEE OF SELECTION.—"Ordered, That Mr. Munro Ferguson be added to the Committee of Selection."—(*Sir William Brampton Gurdon*) 705

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).—Sir WILLIAM BRAMPTON GURDON reported from the Committee of Selection; alterations and additions to various Committees.

Reports to lie upon the Table 705

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.—Lotteries and Advertisements.—That they have appointed a Committee consisting of Five Members to join with a Committee of the Commons to consider and inquire into the Law as to Lotteries and Advertisements, and propose that the Joint Committee do meet in the Chairman of Committees' Committee Room on Tuesday next, at Three of the Clock 707

NEW BILLS.

Trade Disputes Bill.—To be read a second time upon Thursday next, and to be printed. [Bill 187] 707

Bankruptcy (Scotland) Bill.—To be read a second time upon Thursday next, and to be printed. [Bill 188] 707

Vivisection (Abolition) Bill.—To be read a second time upon Tuesday, 5th May, and to be printed. [Bill 189] 707

Industrial and Provident Societies (Amendment) Bill.—To be read a second time upon Wednesday next, and to be printed. [Bill 190] ... 707

Public Health (Markets in Rural Districts) Bill.—To be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 191] 707

PORT OF LONDON.

The President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Lloyd-George, Carnarvon Boroughs) 707

Motion made, and Question, "That leave be given to bring in a Bill to provide for the improvement and better administration of the Port of London; and for purposes incidental thereto,"—(*Mr. Lloyd-George*)—put, and agreed to.

Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Lloyd-George, Mr. Burns, Mr. Buxton, Mr. Harcourt, and Mr. Kearley.

Port of London Bill.—"To provide for the improvement and better administration of the Port of London; and for purposes incidental thereto," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Monday, 13th April, and to be printed. [Bill 192.]

ABSENCE OF THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS.—The Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence, owing to indisposition, of the Chairman of Ways and Means from this day's sitting.

SUPPLY [5TH ALLOTTED DAY].

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. CALDWELL (Lanarkshire, N.) in the Chair.]

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS ESTIMATES, 1908–9.

1. £473,000 to complete the sum for Revenue Buildings.

Sir F. Banbury (City of London) 713
Mr. Ashley (Lancashire, Blackpool) 717
The First Commissioner of Works (Mr. Harcourt, Lancashire, Rossendale) 718
Mr. Stuart Wortley (Sheffield, Hallam) 723
Lord Balcarres (Lancashire, Chorley) 724
Mr. Harcourt 726
Mr. Watt (Glasgow, College) 727
Mr. Hicks Beach (Gloucestershire, Tewkesbury) 727
Mr. Cochrane (Ayrshire, N.) 728
Sir F. Banbury 729
Mr. C. E. Price (Edinburgh, Central) 730

Vote agreed to.

2. Motion made and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £342,900, be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1909, in respect of sundry Public Buildings in Great Britain, not provided for on other Votes."

Mr. Akers-Douglas (Kent, St. Augustine's) 731
Sir William Bull (Hammersmith) 735
Mr. Harcourt 735
Sir C. Schwann (Manchester, N.) 736
Mr. Stuart Wortley 737
Mr. Lane-Fox (Yorkshire, W.R., Barkston Ash) 737
Mr. Harcourt 739
Major Anstruther-Gray (St. Andrews Burghs) 740
Mr. C. E. Price 741
Mr. Rees (Montgomery Boroughs) 741
Mr. Fell (Great Yarmouth) 742
Mr. Harcourt 742
Mr. Hicks Beach 744
Mr. Morton 745
Mr. Cochrane 747
Mr. Harcourt 748
Lord Balcarres 750

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Mr. Harcourt 751
Mr. T. L. Corbett (*Down, N.*) 751
Mr. Lane-Fox 751
Sir F. Banbury 752

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £342,400, be granted for the said Service."—(*Sir F. Banbury.*)

Mr. Harcourt 753
Mr. Mitchell-Thomson (*Lanarkshire, N.W.*) 754
Sir F. Banbury 755
Mr. Morton 755
Mr. Fell 756
Mr. T. L. Corbett 757
Mr. Lupton (*Lincolnshire, Sleaford*) 757

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Original Question put, and agreed to.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £52,400 (including a supplementary sum of £13,000), be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1909, for Expenditure in respect of Diplomatic and Consular Buildings, and for the maintenance of certain Cemeteries Abroad."

Mr. Hicks Beach 758

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £52,300, be granted for the said Service."—(*Mr. Hicks Beach.*)

Mr. Fell 759
Mr. Harcourt 761
Mr. Bowles (*Lambeth, Norwood*) 762
Mr. Rees (*Montgomery Boroughs*) 764
Mr. Morton... 764
Mr. Harmood-Banner (*Liverpool, Everton*) 766
Mr. Ashley 767
Mr. Harcourt 768

Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 28; Noes, 189. (Division List No. 67.)

And, it being after a quarter past Eight of the Clock, and leave having been given to move the Adjournment of the House under Standing Order No. 10, further Proceeding was postponed without Question put.

MAIL STEAMERS AT KINGSTOWN.—MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT.

Mr. Clancy (*Dublin County, N.*) 769

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn." —(*Mr. Clancy.*)

Mr. Mooney (*Newry*) 774
The Attorney-General (*Sir W. Robson, South Shields*) 776
Mr. T. M. Healy 781
Mr. Moore (*Armagh, N.*) 788
Mr. Swift MacNeill 790
The Chief Secretary for Ireland (*Mr. Birrell, Bristol, N.*) 791

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

SUPPLY.

Postponed Proceeding on Question, "That a sum, not exceeding £52,400 (including a supplementary sum of £13,000), be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1909, for Expenditure in respect of Diplomatic and Consular Buildings and for the maintenance of certain Cemeteries Abroad," resumed.

Question again proposed.

Sir F. Banbury 793
Mr. Harcourt 795
Mr. Ashley... 795
Mr. Rees 796
Sir F. Banbury 796
Mr. T. L. Corbett 796

Motion made, and Question put, "That a sum, not exceeding £52,200, be granted for the said Service."—(*Mr. T. L. Corbett.*)

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 33; Noes, 190. (Division List No. 68.)

Original Question again proposed.

Mr. Fell 799
Mr. Gretton (Rutland) 799
Mr. Harcourt 801
Mr. Goulding (Worcester) 802

Motion made, and Question put, "That a sum, not exceeding £52,050, be granted for the said Service."—(*Mr. Goulding.*)

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 32; Noes, 188. (Division List No. 69.)

Original Question again proposed.

And, it being after Eleven of the Clock, and objection being taken to further Proceeding, the CHAIRMAN proceeded to interrupt the Business.

Whereupon Mr. HARCOURT rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

Question put, "That the Question be now put."

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 187; Noes, 32. (Division List No. 70.)

Original Question put accordingly, and agreed to.

Resolutions to be reported upon Monday next; Committee to sit again upon Monday next.

LOTTERIES AND ADVERTISEMENTS.—Ordered, That so much of the Lords Message as relates to the place and time of meeting of the Joint Committee on Lotteries and Advertisements be now considered.

Lords Message considered.

Ordered, That the Committee of this House do meet the Lords Committee as proposed by their Lordships.—(*Mr. Whiteley.*)

Message to the Lords to acquaint them therewith.

Adjourned at twenty-one minutes after Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: FRIDAY, 3RD APRIL, 1908.

The House met at Twelve noon of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Hull and Barnsley Railway Bill.—Read a third time, and passed 809

Great Eastern Railway (General Powers) Bill.—As amended, considered; to be read a third time... 809

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PETITIONS.

Children Bill.—Petition in favour; to lie upon the Table 809

Coal Mines (Eight Hours) (No 2) Bill.—Petition against; to lie upon the Table 809

Coal Mines (Eight Hours) (No. 2) Bill.—Petitions in favour; to lie upon the Table 809

Elementary Education (England and Wales) Bill.—Petitions in favour; to lie upon the Table 809

Housing of the Working Classes Bill.—Petition against; to lie upon the Table 809

Licensed Premises (Exclusion of Children).—Petitions for legislation; to lie upon the Table 809

Licensing Bill.—41 Petitions against; to lie upon the Table 809

Licensing Bill.—9 Petitions for alteration; to lie upon the Table 810

Licensing Bill.—86 Petitions in favour; to lie upon the Table 810

Liquor Traffic (Local Option) (Scotland) Bill.—5 Petitions in favour; to lie upon the Table 810

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday Bill.—6 Petitions in favour to lie upon the Table 810

Women's Enfranchisement Bill.—2 Petitions in favour; to lie upon the Table 810

RETURNS, REPORTS, &c.

Trade Reports (Annual Series).—Diplomatic and Consular Report, Annual Series, No. 3968 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 810

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Post Office Surveyors' Districts 811
Imperial Grant for Upkeep of Highways 811
Argentine and Natal—Supposed Preferential Tariff 811
The Tug "Rover's" Engines 812
Unappointed Learners in Belfast Post Office 812
Irvine Post Office 812
Sentence on Mrs. E. Pelosi 812
Small Holdings 813
Largy National School—Publican as Master 814
Kenmare Fair Rent Applications 814
Repair to Boat-slip at Roads, Glen Cove 815
Purchase of the Estate of Mr. R. Keys, of Crolly... 815
Aghatubrid Estate Dispute... 816
Cordite Destroyed 816
Permanent Staff of Norfolk Garrison Artillery (Militia) 817

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).—Sir WILLIAM BRAMPTON GURDON reported from the Committee of Selection; That they had discharged the following member from Standing Committee B (in respect of the Children Bill): Sir Maurice Levy; and had appointed in substitution (in respect of the Children Bill) Mr. Wedgwood

Report to lie upon the Table 818

Port of London Bill.—Ordered, That the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills do examine the Port of London Bill, with respect to compliance with the Standing Orders relative to Private Bills.—(*Mr. Lloyd-George*)... ... 818

Poor Law (Ireland) Bill.—Order for Second Reading read

Captain Craig (Down, E) 818

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Captain Craig.*)

Mr. John Redmond (Waterford) 830
The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. Birrell, Bristol, N.) 836
Mr. Walter Long (Dublin, S.) 840
Mr. Charles Craig (Antrim, S.) 846
Mr. Summerbell (Sunderland) 850
Mr. Barrie (Londonderry, N.) 851
Mr. Fetherstonhaugh (Fermanagh, N.) 856
Mr. Moore (Armagh, N.) 858

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 35; Noes, 89. (Division List No. 71.)

Coroners' Inquests Bill.—Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. Higham (Yorkshire, W.R., Sowerby) 861

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Higham.*)

Mr. Luke White (Yorkshire, E.R., Buckrose) 863
Sir F. Banbury (City of London) 863
The Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Herbert Samuel, Yorkshire, Cleveland) 868
Sir Walter Foster (Derbyshire, Ilkeston) 871
Viscount Helmsley (Yorkshire, N.R., Thirsk) 873
Mr. C. Duncan (Barrow-in-Furness) 876

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 118; Noes, 45. (Division List No. 72.)

Ballot Act (1872) Amendment (No. 2) Bill.—Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Captain Craig 879

Mr. Stanley Wilson (Yorkshire, E.R., Holderness) called attention to the fact that forty Members were not present.

House counted; and, forty Members not being present—

The House adjourned at twenty-five minutes after Four of the Clock till Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS: MONDAY, 6TH APRIL, 1908.

Baron Hotham.—Petition of Frederick William, Baron Hotham, in the Peerage of Ireland, claiming a right to vote at the elections of Representative Peers for Ireland, read, and referred to the Lord Chancellor to consider and report thereupon to the House 881

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PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

FURTHER STANDING ORDERS applicable to the following Bills complied with :—Finchley Urban District Council ; Bury and District Joint Water Board ; Dublin and South-Eastern Railway ; Seaham Harbour Dock ; City of Glasgow.
The same was ordered to lie on the Table 881

Alliance and other Assurance and Insurance Companies Bill.—[H.L.] ; Wath-upon-Dearne Urban District Council Gas Bill [H.L.]. (Petition for additional Provision.)—Examiners' Certificates of non-compliance with the Standing Orders referred to the Standing Orders Committee on Thursday next 881

Bognor Gas Light and Coke Company Bill [H.L.].—Reported, with Amendments 881

Swansea Valley Gas Bill [H.L.].—Reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments 881

Cardiff Railway Bill [H.L.].—Read 3^{a}, and passed, and sent to the Commons 881

Hull and Barnsley Railway Bill; Dartford Gas Bill.—Brought from the Commons, read 1^{a}, and referred to the Examiners 881

Herne Bay Pier Bill [H.L.].—Returned from the Commons agreed to ... 881

PETITIONS.

Land Values (Scotland) Bill.—Petition in favour of ; read, and ordered to lie on the Table 882

RETURNS, REPORTS, &c.

Education (Scotland).—Memorandum on nature study and the teaching of science in Scottish schools 882

Kingstown Harbour.—Correspondence relating to the use of Kingstown Harbour by the vessels of the London and North Western Railway Company 882

Irish Mail Service.—Correspondence relating to the arrangement made in 1898 for the acceleration of the Irish Day Mail Service, and the revision of the same in the present year 882

Trade Reports : Annual Series.—No. 3968. Belgium (Antwerp) 882

India (Use of Government Churches in India).—Papers relating to the use for Presbyterian services of garrison churches in India which have been consecrated for the services of the Church of England 882

Army.—Approximate estimate of expenditure under the Military Works Acts of 1897, 1899, 1901, and 1903 882

Irish Land Commission (Rules).
Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie upon the Table ... 882

Criminal Appeal (Rules, 1908).—Additional rule 882

Superannuation.—Treasury Minutes, dated 3rd April 883

Government Insurances and Annuities.—Account of all moneys received on account of contracts for the grant of deferred life annuities and for payments on death.
Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table 883

Lotteries and Indecent Advertisements.—Message from the Commons that they have ordered that the Committee appointed by them to join with the Committee of this House to consider and inquire into the law on the said subject, do meet the Lords Committee in the Chairman of Committee's Committee Room, To-morrow at Three o'clock, as proposed by their Lordships 883

Committee of Selection.—Leave given to the Committee of Selection to report from time to time. First Report with an Appendix made, and to be printed. (No. 47) 883

Standing Committee.—Report from the Committee of Selection for the Standing Committee that they have added the Earl of Stamford to the Standing Committee. Read, and ordered to lie on the Table 883

THE RESIGNATION OF THE PRIME MINISTER.

The Lord Privy Seal (*The Marquess of Ripon*) 883
The Marquess of Lansdowne 885

Army (Annual) Bill.—Read 3ª, and passed 886

House adjourned at Twenty minutes before Five o'clock, till Tuesday, 14th April.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: MONDAY, 6TH APRIL, 1908.

The House met at a quarter before Three of the Clock.

NEW WRITS.

New Writs,—for the County of Kincardine, in the room of John William Crombie, esquire, deceased.—(*Mr. Whiteley.*)

County of Derby (Western Division) right hon. Victor Christian William Cavendish, now the Duke of Devonshire, called up to the House of Peers.—(*Sir Alexander Acland-Hood.*) 886

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS NOT PREVIOUSLY INQUIRED INTO COMPLIED WITH.)—Camberwell and other Metropolitan Borough Councils (Superannuation) Bill [Lords]. Pontypridd Water Bill [Lords]. Audenshaw Urban District Council Bill [Lords]. Fishguard and Rosslare Railways and Harbours Bill [Lords]. Merthyr Tydfil Corporation Bill [Lords]. North British and Mercantile Insurance Company Bill [Lords].

Ordered, that the Bills be read a second time 886

Dartford Gas Bill.—Read a third time, and passed 886

Herne Bay Pier Bill [LORDS].—Read the third time, and passed, without Amendment 886

Draycott Gas Bill, Gosport Gas Bill, Humber Commercial Railway and Dock Bill, Leeds Corporation Bill, Leicester Corporation Bill, Motherwell Burgh Extension, etc., Bill, North Eastern Railway Bill, Wishaw Burgh Electricity, etc., Bill, as amended, considered, to be read a third time 886

Interoceanic Railway of Mexico Bill [LORDS]; London County Council (Tramways and Improvements) Bill [Lords]. Read a second time and committed 887

Rhymney Railway Bill [LORDS].—Read a second time, and committed ... 887

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PETITIONS.

Coal Mines (Eight Hours) (No. 2) Bill.—12 Petitions in favour; to lie upon the Table.

Factors Act (1889) Amendment Bill.—Petition in favour; to lie upon the Table.

Licensing Bill.—67 Petitions against; to lie upon the Table.

Licensing Bill.—5 Petitions for alteration; to lie upon the Table.

Licensing Bill.—88 Petitions in favour; to lie upon the Table.

Liquor Traffic (Local Option) (Scotland) Bill.—4 Petitions in favour; to lie upon the Table 888

Merchandise Marks Bill.—Petition in favour: to lie upon the Table ... 888

Public-House (Exclusion of Children) (Scotland) Bill.—Petition in favour; to lie upon the Table 888

Sale of Food and Drugs Acts (Amendment) (Scotland) Bill.—Petition against; to lie upon the Table 888

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday Bill.—Petitions in favour; to lie upon the Table 888

RETURNS, REPORTS, &c.

Irish Mail Service.—Correspondence relating to; to lie upon the Table ... 888

Irish Mail Service (Kingstown Harbour).—Correspondence relating to the use of Kingstown Harbour by the Vessels of the London and North Western Railway Company; to lie upon the Table 889

Superannuation Act, 1884.—Treasury Minutes; to lie upon the Table ... 889

Government Insurances and Annuities.—Account presented, of all moneys received and of the disposal thereof; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 117] 889

Irish Land Commission (Rules).—To lie upon the Table 889

East India (Use of Government Churches in India).—To lie upon the Table 889

Army (Military Works).—Approximate Estimate of Expenditure under the Military Works Act; to lie upon the Table 889

Education (Scotland).—Memorandum on Nature Study and the Teaching of Science in Scottish Schools; to lie upon the Table 890

Telegraph (Construction) Bill.—Order [2nd July, 1907] for a Return relative thereto, and Orders that the said Return do lie upon the Table and be printed, read and discharged 890

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Distress for King's Taxes 890

Licensed Houses at Codicote 891

Pay in Provincial Post Offices 891

Customs Lower Section Clerks 891

Fife Coal Company 892

Liquor Trade—Mortality Statistics... 893

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Estates of Deceased Persons 896
Irish Land Stock 896
Irish Land Purchase Finance 897
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Case of Michael Tierney of the Connaught Rangers 905
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Dublin Education Department Accounts 908
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Bengal and Assam Judicial Services 910
Annalee Labourers' Cottages 910
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QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

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Armour Piercing Projectiles 918
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Case of Alexander C. Burrows, Dublin Stockbroker 951
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THE RESIGNATION OF THE PRIME MINISTER.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Asquith, Fifeshire, E.) 958
Mr. A. J. Balfour (City of London) 959
Mr. John Redmond (Waterford) 960

COMMITTEES.—Ordered, that all Committees have leave to sit, notwithstanding any adjournment of the House, until the adjournment for the Easter Recess.—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

ADJOURNMENT.—Resolved, That this House do now adjourn until Tuesday, 14th April.—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

Adjourned accordingly at two minutes before Four o'clock till Tuesday, 14th April.

HOUSE OF LORDS: TUESDAY, 14TH APRIL, 1908.

COMMISSION.—The following Bills received the Royal Assent:—Army (Annual); Herne Bay Pier 961

THE LORD HEMPHILL—Sat first in Parliament after the death of his father ... 961

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 3) Bill [H.L.]. (No. 48).—And

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order (No. 4) Bill [H.L.]. (No. 49).

Were presented by the Lord Colebrooke (for the Lord Denman); read 1ª; to be printed; and referred to the Examiners 961

Derby Gas Bill; London, Brighton, and South Coast Railway Bill [H.L.].—Reported, with Amendments 961

Tramways Order Confirmation (No. 1) Bill [H.L.].—Reported, with Amendments, and recommitted to a Committee of the Whole House 961

STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE.—Report from, that the Standing Orders not complied with in respect of the Alliance and other Assurance and Insurance Companies Bill [H.L.] ought to be dispensed with, and the Bill allowed to proceed.

And that the Standing Orders not complied with in respect of the petition for an additional provision in the Wath-upon-Dearne Urban District Council Gas Bill [H.L.]. ought to be dispensed with, and leave given to the Committee on the Bill to insert the additional provision.

Read, and agreed to 961

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RETURNS, REPORTS, &c.

Cancer Research (Colonies).—Further correspondence relating to the Cancer Research Scheme ... 962

Transvaal.—Correspondence relating to the Transvaal Indentured Labour Laws Temporary Continuance Act, 1907 ... 962

Treaty Series.

No 8. (1908) Supplementary Agreement between the United Kingdom and Germany respecting commercial travellers' samples.

No. 9. (1908) Accession of Spain to the declaration respecting maritime law.

Turkey, No. 2. (1908) Further correspondence respecting proposals by His Majesty's Government for reforms in Macedonia ... 962

Trade Reports (Annual Series).—No. 3969. United States. No. 3970. Persia (Provinces of Seistan and Kain) ... 962

Miscellaneous.—No. 667. Brazil (Mining Industry in the State of Minas Geraes) ... 962

Board of Education.—Statement showing the cases in which the Board of Education have received applications from local education authorities for special grants for the building of new public elementary schools, and the stage which each case had reached on 31st March, 1908.

Regulations for the preliminary education of elementary school teachers ... 962

Education (Scotland).—(Northern and Highland Divisions). General Report for the year 1907.

Regulations for the preliminary education, training, and certification of teachers for various grades of schools, 1908 ... 963

Army.—Return showing the establishment of each unit of Militia in the United Kingdom, and the numbers present, absent, and wanting to complete at the training of 1907 ... 963

Judicial Statistics (England and Wales), 1906 (Part II. Civil Judicial Statistics) ... 963

Royal Observatory (Edinburgh).—Eighteenth Annual Report of the Astronomer-Royal for Scotland ... 963

Local Government (Scotland).—Return of the areas, population, and valuation of counties, burghs, and parishes in Scotland ... 963

Agricultural and Technical Instruction for Ireland (Departmental Committee on Irish Forestry.—Report. Minutes of evidence, appendix, and index ... 963

Irish Land Commission.—Return of advances ... 963

Cost of living in German Towns.—Report of an inquiry by the Board of Trade ... 964

Horse Breeding.—Twelfth Report of the Royal Commission on Horse Breeding.

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table ... 964

Universities (Scotland) Act, 1889.—Annual Report on the state of the finances of the University of St. Andrews.

Annual Statistical Report by the University Court of the University of St. Andrews 964

Life Assurance Companies.—Statements of Accounts, and of life assurance and annuity business, and abstracts of actuarial reports 964

Irish Land Purchase Fund (Accounts, 1906–1907).—Accounts of receipts and payments by the Commissioners for the Reduction of the National Debt in respect of the capital and income of the Irish Land Purchase Fund ... 964

India (Loans raised in England).—Return of all loans raised in England under the provisions of any Acts of Parliament, chargeable on the revenues of India, outstanding at the commencement of the half-year ended 31st March, 1908 964

Naval Savings Banks.—Account of deposits in Naval Savings Banks and the payments thereof, and of interest thereon, of all investments under the Naval Savings Banks Act, 1866 965

Merchant Shipping (Mercantile Marine Fund) Act, 1898.—Draft Order in Council 965

Egyptian Guaranteed Loan of 1885.—Account upon 31st March, 1908 ... 965

Greek Loan of 1898.—Account up to 31st March, 1908.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table 965

Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899.—Report from the Committee of Selection, that the following Lords be proposed to the House as the panel of Lords to act as Commissioners under the Act, viz.:—

L. Saye and Sele;
L. Bowes (*E. Strathmore and Kinghorn*);

agreed to; and the said Lords appointed accordingly 965

House adjourned at five minutes past Three o'clock, to Tuesday, the fifth of May next, at a quarter past Four o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: TUESDAY, 14TH APRIL, 1908.

The House met at a quarter before Three of the Clock.

NEW WRITS.

For Borough of Dewsbury, in the room of Walter Runciman, esquire, President of the Board of Education—(*Mr. Whiteley*).

Borough of Manchester (North-West Division).—Right hon. Winston Leonard Spencer Churchill, President of the Committee of Privy Council for Trade and Plantations.—(*Mr. Whiteley*).

Borough of Sheffield (Central Division).—Colonel Sir Charles Edward Howard Vincent, K.C.M.G., C.B., deceased.—(*Mr. Henry Foster*) 966

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS NOT PREVIOUSLY INQUIRED INTO COMPLIED WITH).—Llanelly Gas Bill [Lords].

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time 966

PORT OF LONDON BILL (STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE THERETO COMPLIED WITH) 966

Great Eastern Railway (General Powers) Bill.—Read the third time, and passed 966

Blaydon and Ryton Water (Transfer) Bill; Dover Graving Docks Bill.—As amended, considered; to be read the third time 967

Knott End Railway Bill.—As amended, considered; a clause added; Bill to be read the third time 967

Louth and East Coast Railway (Transfer) Bill.—As amended, considered; to be read the third time 967

Private Bills, etc.—Ordered, That Standing Orders 39, 128, and 230 be suspended, and that the time for depositing Petitions and Memorials against Private Bills, or against any Bill to confirm any Provisional Order or Provisional Certificate, and for depositing duplicates of any Documents relating to any Bill to confirm any Provisional Order or Provisional Certificate, also for depositing at the Private Bill Office all Documents relating to any order under the Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, be extended to the first day on which the House shall sit after the recess.—(*The Deputy-Chairman*) 967

Sligo and Arigna Railway Bill.—Petition for additional Provision; referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 967

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have agreed to Army (Annual) Bill, without Amendment.

That they have passed—Patents and Designs Bill [Lords]; Municipal Representation Bill [Lords]; Cardiff Railway Bill [Lords]; Metropolitan Electric Tramways Bill [Lords]; Argentine North Eastern Railway Bill [Lords]; and St. Marylebone Borough Council Superannuation Bill [Lords] 967

Cardiff Railway Bill [Lords]; Metropolitan Electric Tramways Bill [Lords]; Argentine North Eastern Railway Bill [Lords]; St. Marylebone Borough Council (Superannuation) Bill [Lords]. Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 967

Manchester Corporation Bill.—Reported, with Amendments, Report to lie upon the Table and to be printed 967

Margate Corporation Bill.—Reported, with Amendments., from the Police and Sanitary Committee; Report to lie upon the Table and to be printed 967

Widnes Corporation Bill.—Reported, with Amendments, from the Police and Sanitary Committee; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 967

PETITIONS.

Coal Mines (Eight Hours) (No. 2) Bill.—Petition against; to lie upon the Table 967

Coal Mines (Eight Hours) (No. 2) Bill.—41 Petitions in favour; to lie upon the Table 967

Dairies (Scotland) Bill.—Petition in favour; to lie upon the Table 969

Elementary Education (England and Wales) Bill.—Petition against; to lie upon the Table 969

Elementary Education (England and Wales) Bill.—5 Petitions in favour; to lie upon the Table 969

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Foreign Trawlers Regulation Bill.—Petition in favour; to lie upon the Table 969

Housing of the Working Classes Bill.—Petition against; to lie upon the Table 969

Licensed Premises (Exclusion of Children).—2 Petitions for legislation; to lie upon the Table 969

Licensing Bill.—64 Petitions against; to lie upon the Table 969

Licensing Bill.—5 Petitions for alteration; to lie upon the Table 970

Licensing Bill.—363 Petitions in favour; to lie upon the Table 971

Licensing Bill and Liquor Traffic (Local Option) (Scotland Bill).—Petitions in favour; to lie upon the Table 971

Liquor Traffic (Local Option) (Scotland) Bill.—11 Petitions in favour; to lie upon the Table 971

Merchandise Marks Bill.—Petitions in favour; to lie upon the Table ... 971

Metropolitan Sewers and Drains Bill.—Petitions in favour; to lie upon the Table 971

Public Houses (Exclusion of Children) Scotland Bill.—Petitions in favour; to lie upon the Table 971

Representation of the People Bill.—Petitions in favour; to lie upon the Table 971

Sale of Food and Drugs Act (Amendment) (Scotland) Bill.—Petitions in favour; to lie upon the Table 971

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday Bill.—3 Petitions in favour; to lie upon the Table 972

Women's Enfranchisement Bill.—2 Petitions in favour; to lie upon the Table 972

PARLIAMENTARY PAPERS (RECESS).—The following Papers, presented by Command of His Majesty during the Recess, were delivered to the Librarian of the House of Commons during the Recess, pursuant to the Standing Order of the 14th August, 1896.

1. Turkey (No. 2, 1908).
2. Treaty Series (No. 8, 1908).
3. Treaty Series (No. 9, 1908).
4. Trade Reports (Miscellaneous Series). Copy of Diplomatic and Consular Report, Miscellaneous Series, No. 667.
5. Trade Reports (Annual Series). Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 3969 and 3970.
6. Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction (Ireland) (Departmental Committee). Report of the Departmental Committee on Irish Forestry.
7. Transvaal. Correspondence relating to the Transvaal Indentured Labour Laws Temporary Continuance Act, 1907.
8. Local Government (Scotland). Return of the Areas, Population, and Valuation of Counties, Burghs and Parishes in Scotland.
9. Judicial Statistics (England and Wales). Judicial Statistics for England and Wales, 1906.

10. Royal Observatory (Edinburgh). Copy of Eighteenth Annual Report of the Astronomer-Royal for Scotland.

11. Cost of Living (German Towns). Copy of Report of an Inquiry by the Board of Trade.

Ordered, That the said Papers do lie upon the Table 972

RETURNS, REPORTS, &c.

Education (Scotland) (General Reports).—General Report by the Chief Inspector of the Northern and Highland Divisions of Scotland for the year 1907; to lie upon the Table 973

Education (Scotland).—Regulations for the Preliminary Education, Training, and Certification of Teachers for various Grades of Schools, 1908; to lie upon the Table 973

University of St. Andrews.—Annual Statistical Report by the University Court of the University of St. Andrews for 1906–7; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 118] 973

University of St. Andrews.—Annual Report on the State of the Finances of the University for the year 1906–7; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed [No. 119] 973

Naval Savings Banks.—Account presented, of Deposits in Naval Savings Banks, and the payments thereof; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 120] 973

Life Assurance Companies.—Statements of Accounts, and of Life Assurance and Annuity Business and Abstracts of Actuarial Reports; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 121]... 974

Merchant Shipping (Mercantile Marine Fund) Act, 1898.—Draft Order in Council; to lie upon the Table 974

Irish Land Commission.—Return of Advances; to lie upon the Table ... 974

East India (Loans raised in England).—Return of all Loans raised in England; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 122] 974

Board of Education.—Statement showing the Cases in which the Board of Education have received applications from Local Education Authorities for Special Grants for the building of New Public Elementary Schools and the stage which each Case had reached on 31st March, 1908; to lie upon the Table 974

Board of Education.—Regulations for Secondary Schools; to lie upon the Table 974

Board of Education.—Regulations for the Preliminary Education of Elementary School Teachers; to lie upon the Table... 975

Horse-Breeding Royal Commission.—Twelfth Report of the Royal Commission; to lie upon the Table 975

Greek Loan of 1898.—Account presented; to lie upon the Table 975

Egyptian Guaranteed Loan of 1885.—Account presented; to lie upon the Table 975

Paper Laid upon the Table by the Clerk of the House.

Irish Land Purchase Fund.—Accounts of the Commissioners for the Reduction of the National Debt in respect of the Capital and Income of the Irish Land Purchase Fund; to be printed. [No. 123] 975

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Tramways and Light Railways (Street and Road).—Return ordered ... 975

Loans Contracted by Local Authorities.—Order [26th August, 1907] for a Return Relative thereto read, and discharged; and, instead thereof—Return ordered 976

Law Charges and Criminal Prosecutions (Ireland).—Return ordered ... 976

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Telegraphic Delays at Cork Post Office 976
Bristol Telegraph Staff and the Efficiency Rate 978
Arming of the "Dreadnought" 978
Acting Overseer at Belfast Post Office 978
Sick and Annual Leave of Post Office Medical Officers 979
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Increased Salaries in the Irish Agricultural Department... 984
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Drainage of the River Robe 994
Sale of the Island Farm, Knox Estate 995
Economic Holdings at Kilmaine 996
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Labourers Act Inquiry at Mullingar 997
Non-production of Vouchers by the Rathmines and Rathgar Urban Council ... 997
Largy Schoolmaster 999
Payment of Local Government Auditors 999

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).—Sir WILLIAM BRAMPTON GURDON reported from the Committee of Selection; That they had discharged the following Members from Standing Committee B (in respect of the Children

Bill): Mr. Solicitor-General, Mr. Whitbread, and Mr. Mond; and had appointed in substitution (in respect of the Children Bill): Mr. Bramsdon, Mr. Fiennes, and Mr. Percy Barlow.

Report to lie upon the Table 1000

ROYAL ASSENT.—Message to attend the Lords Commissioners.

The House went; and, being returned;

Mr. SPEAKER reported the Royal Assent to—1. Army (Annual) Act, 1908. 2. Herne Bay Pier Act, 1908 1001

ADJOURNMENT.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn till Monday, 27th April."—(*Mr. George Whiteley.*)

Mr. Walter Long (Dublin, S.) 1001
The Parliamentary Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. George Whiteley, Yorkshire, W.R., Pudsey) 1002
Sir Gilbert Parker (Gravesend) 1004
The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Lloyd-George, Carnarvon Boroughs) 1007
Mr. Forster (Kent, Sevenoaks) 1010
Mr. Pike Pease (Darlington) 1010
Mr. Gretton (Rutland) 1011
Sir W. J. Collins (St. Pancras, W.) 1012
Mr. Harold Cox (Preston) 1013
Mr. Fell (Great Yarmouth) 1014
Mr. Annan Bryce (Inverness Burghs) 1014
Mr. Jowett (Bradford, W.) 1015
Mr. Clement Edwards (Denbigh District) 1016
Captain Clive (Herefordshire, Ross) 1017
Mr. Verney (Buckinghamshire, N.) 1018
Mr. Clynes (Manchester, N.E.) 1018
Mr. Crooks (Woolwich) 1019
Mr. William Abraham (Glamorganshire, Rhondda) 1020

Question put, and agreed to.

House adjourned at twenty-five minutes past Four till Monday, 27th April.

HOUSE OF COMMONS, MONDAY, 27TH APRIL, 1908.

The House met at a quarter before Three of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Draycott Gas Bill; Gosport Gas Bill; Humber Commercial Railway and Dock Bill; Leeds Corporation Bill; Leicester Corporation Bill; Motherwell Burgh Extension, &c., Bill.—Read the third time, and passed 1021

North Eastern Railway Bill (KING'S CONSENT SIGNIFIED).—Bill read the third time and passed 1021

Wishaw Burgh Electricity, &c., Bill.—Read the third time and passed ... 1021

Dundalk Urban District Council Bill.—As amended, considered; to be read the third time 1021

Audenshaw Urban District Council Bill [Lords]; Camberwell and other Metropolitan Borough Councils (Superannuation) Bill [Lords]; Fishguard and Rosslare Railways and Harbours Bill [Lords]; Merthyr Tydfil Corporation Bill [Lords].—Read a second time, and committed 1021

Pontypridd Water Bill [Lords].—Read a second time, and committed ... 1021

Briton Ferry Urban District Council Bill [Lords] (by Order).—Read a second time, and committed 1021

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill.—Read the first time, to be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills and to be printed. [Bill 193] 1021

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill.—To be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 194] ... 1022

Edinburgh Corporation (Tramways, &c.) Order Confirmation Bill.—read the first time; and ordered (under Section 9 of the Act) to be read a second time upon Tuesday, 5th May, and to be printed. [Bill 195] ... 1022

PETITIONS.

Coal Mines (Eight Hours) (No. 2) Bill.—32 Petitions in favour; to lie upon the Table 1022

Elementary Education (England and Wales) Bill.—2 Petitions in favour; to lie upon the Table 1022

Licensing Bill.—23 petitions against; to lie upon the Table 1022

Licensing Bill.—2 Petitions for alteration; to lie upon the Table 1023

Licensing Bill.—219 Petitions in favour; to lie upon the Table 1023

Liquor Traffic (Local Option) (Scotland) Bill.—8 Petitions in favour; to lie upon the Table 1024

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday Bill.—3 Petitions in favour, to lie upon the Table 1024

Parliamentary Papers (Recess). The following Papers, presented by Command of His Majesty during the Easter Recess, were delivered to the Librarian of the House of Commons during the Recess, pursuant to the Standing Order of 14th August, 1896:—

Army (Militia Units).—

Cancer Research (Colonies).—Further Correspondence.

Education (Scotland).—Regulations as to Grants to Secondary Schools in Scotland, 1908.

Irish Universities Bill, 1908.—Preliminary Draft of the Articles of a Charter for the University to have its seat in Belfast.

Irish Universities Bill, 1908.—Preliminary Draft of the Articles of a Charter for the University to have its seat in Dublin.

Mines and Quarries.—Copy of Reports of His Majesty's Inspectors of Mines.

Cyprus.—Copy of Correspondence relating to the affairs of Cyprus.

Irish Land Commission (Proceedings).

Prisons (Scotland).—Thirtieth Annual Report of the Prison Commissioners for Scotland.

Treaty Series (No. 10, 1908).—Agreement between the United Kingdom and France respecting Death Duties.

Trade Report (Annual Series).—Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 3972–3974, and 3977.

Miscellaneous, No. 3 (1908).—Correspondence with His Majesty's

Ambassador at Berlin respecting a Declaration by the Governments of Great Britain, Denmark, France, Germany, the Netherlands, and Sweden on the subject of the maintenance of the *status quo* in the territories bordering upon the North Sea.

Ordered, That the said Papers do lie upon the Table 1024

RETURNS, REPORTS, &c.

Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1887 (Eviction Notices).—Return of Eviction; to lie upon the Table 1025

Intermediate Education (Ireland).—Report of the Intermediate Education Board for Ireland; to lie upon the Table 1025

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table:—Manual of Procedure in the Public Business of the House of Commons, 1908 [2nd edition] 1026

NEW WRIT.—New Writ for the Borough of Wolverhampton (East Division), in the room of the right hon. Sir Henry Hartley Fowler, G.C.S.I. (Chiltern Hundreds).—(*Mr. Whiteley*) 1026

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Imprisonment at St. Petersburg of Mr. Tchayskovsky 1026
Railway Crossing at Garryduff 1027
Archer Street Post Office, W. 1027
Transmission of Press Telegrams 1028
Ireland and the Sugar Duty 1029
Dog Dealers and Dog Licences 1029
Friendly Societies and Income-tax 1029
Suggested Tax on Traction Engines 1030
The Duke of York's School 1030
Standard for Preservatives in Food 1031
Mortality in the Licensed Victuallers' Trade 1032

THE LATE PRIME MINISTER.

The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (*Mr. Asquith, Fifeshire, E*) 1033
Mr. Akers Douglas (*Kent, St. Augustine's*) 1036

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the House do now adjourn." —(*Mr. Asquith*)

Mr. T. P. O'Connor (*Liverpool, Scotland*) 1038
Sir Alfred Thomas (*Glamorganshire, E.*) 1039
Mr. Arthur Henderson (*Durham, Barnard Castle*) 1039

Question put, and agreed to.

Resolved, "That this House do now adjourn."—(*Mr. Asquith.*)

Adjourned accordingly at twenty-seven minutes after Three o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: TUESDAY, 28TH APRIL, 1908.

The House met at a quarter before Three of the Clock.

NEW WRIT.—New Writ for the Montrose District of Burghs, in the room of the Right Hon. John Morley, O.M. (Manor of Northstead).—(*Mr. Whiteley*) ... 1041

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PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDER 65 COMPLIED WITH).—Argentine North-Eastern Railway Bill [Lords.]
Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time 1041

PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS NOT PREVIOUSLY INQUIRED INTO COMPLIED WITH.)—St. Marylebone Borough Council (Superannuation) Bill [Lords]; Cardiff Railway Bill [Lords]; Argentine North-Eastern Railway Bill [Lords]; Skegness Urban District Council Bill [Lords].
Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time 1041

Blaydon and Ryton Water Transfer (Bill) (KING'S CONSENT SIGNIFIED).—Bill read the third time, and passed 1041

Knott End Railway Bill; Louth and East Coast Railway (Transfer) Bill.—Read the third time, and passed 1041

North British and Mercantile Insurance Company Bill [LORDS] (BY ORDER).—Read a second time, and committed 1042

Norwich Union Fire Insurance Society Bill [LORDS] (BY ORDER).—Read a second time, and committed 1042

PETITIONS.

Aldermen (Borough Elections).—Petition for alteration of law; to lie upon the Table 1042

Children Bill.—Petition for alteration; to lie upon the Table 1042

Children Bill.—3 Petitions in favour; to lie upon the Table 1042

Coal Mines (Eight Hours) (No. 2) Bill.—3 Petitions against; to lie upon the Table 1042

Coal Mines (Eight Hours) (No. 2) Bill.—117 Petitions in favour; to lie upon the Table 1042

Dairies (Scotland) Bill.—Petition in favour; to lie upon the Table 1043

Elementary Education (England and Wales) Bill.—Petition against; to lie upon the Table 1043

Elementary Education (England and Wales) Bill.—10 Petitions in favour; to lie upon the Table 1043

Home Work Regulation Bill.—Petition against; to lie upon the Table ... 1043

Housing, Town Planning, etc., Bill.—Petition in favour; to lie upon the Table 1043

Infant Life Protection Bill.—Petition in favour; to lie upon the Table ... 1043

Licensed Premises (Election Days) Closing Bill.—Petition against: to lie upon the Table 1043

Licensed Premises (Exclusion of Children).—Petition for legislation; to lie upon the Table 1043

Licensing Bill.—94 Petitions against; to lie upon the Table 1043

Licensing Bill.—8 Petitions for alteration; to lie upon the Table 1044

Licensing Bill.—837 Petitions in favour; to lie upon the Table 1044

Licensing Bill and Liquor Traffic (Local Option) (Scotland) Bill.—Petition in favour; to lie upon the Table 1047

Liquor Traffic (Local Option) (Scotland) Bill.—33 Petitions in favour; to lie upon the Table 1047

Metropolitan Sewers and Drains Bill.—Petition in favour; to lie upon the Table 1047

Public Health Act (1875) Amendment (Water Rights) Bill.—Petition in favour; to lie upon the Table... 1047

Public Health Officers Bill.—Petition in favour; to lie upon the Table ... 1047

Public-Houses (Exclusion of Children) (Scotland) Bill.—Petition in favour; to lie upon the Table 1048

RETURNS, REPORTS, &c.

Bankruptcy Act, 1883 (Proceedings).—Account presented, showing the Receipts and Expenditure on account of Bankruptcy Proceedings; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 124] 1048

Companies (Winding-up) Act, 1890.—Account presented, showing Receipts and Expenditure on account of Proceedings; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 125] 1048

Arklow Harbour.—Report of the Arklow Harbour Commissioners; to lie upon the Table 1048

Evicted Tenants (Ireland) Act, 1907.—Regulations made by the Treasury under the Evicted Tenants (Ireland) Act, 1907; to lie upon the Table ... 1048

Sheriff Courts (Scotland) Act, 1907.—Act of Sederunt anent Procedure in Appeals; to lie upon the Table 1048

Sheriff Courts (Scotland) Act, 1907.—Act of Sederunt regulating the Fees of Agents and others in the Sheriff Court; to lie upon the Table 1048

Trade Reports (Annual Series).—Diplomatic and Consular Report, Annual Series, No. 3971; to lie upon the Table 1048

Irish Land Commission.—Return of Advances, made under the Irish Land Act, 1903; to lie upon the Table 1048

Drunkenness (Ireland).—Return presented, relative thereto; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 126]... 1049

Law Charges and Criminal Prosecutions (Ireland).—Return presented, relative thereto; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 127] ... 1049

Shop Hours Act, 1904.—Order made by the Municipal Council of the City of Dublin; to lie upon the Table 1049

Metropolitan Police.—Accounts presented, of the Metropolitan Police and the Police Pension Funds; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 128] 1049

Army (Volunteer Corps).—Annual Return of the Volunteer Corps of Great Britain for the Year 1907; to lie upon the Table 1049

Paper Laid upon the Table by the Clerk of the House.—Thames Conservancy, General Report and Accounts of the Conservators for 1907; to be printed. [No. 129] 1049

Fleets (Great Britain and Foreign Countries).—Returns ordered ... 1049

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Coal Mines (Eight Hours) Bill ... 1102

Payments for New Licences ... 1103

Monopoly Value of On-Licences ... 1103

Lords and Commons ... 1104

Women and the Licensing Bill ... 1104

Licensing Compensation ... 1104

Revenue from Alcohol ... 1105

NEW MEMBERS SWORN.

Right hon. Walter Runciman, for Parliamentary Borough of Dewsbury.

James Fitzalan Hope, esquire, for Parliamentary Borough of Sheffield (Central Division).

Henry William Edmond Petty-Fitzmaurice, esquire, commonly called Earl of Kerry, for County of Derby (Western Division) ... 1105

NEW BILLS.

Public Health Acts Amendment (Markets) Bill.—To be read a second time upon Tuesday next, and to be printed. [Bill 196] ... 1106

Engines and Boilers (Persons in Charge) (No. 2) Bill.—To be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 198] ... 1106

New-Born Children (Protection) Bill.—To be read a second time upon Thursday, and to be printed. [Bill 199] ... 1106

Home Work Bill.—To be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 200] ... 1106

Army Council Bill.—To be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 197] ... 1106

Daylight Saving Bill.—The Select Committee on the Daylight Saving Bill was nominated of: Mr. Harrison-Broadley, Mr. Holt, Mr. Hutton, Sir Walter Nugent, Mr. Robert Pearce, Captain Pirie, Colonel Philipps, Mr. Thomas Frederick Richards, and Sir Edward Sassoon.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That Three be the quorum.—(*Mr. Whiteley*) ... 1106

Licensing Bill.—Order for Second Reading read.

The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. Asquith, Fifeshire, E.) ... 1107

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Mr. Cave (Surrey, Kingston) ... 1117

Mr. Evelyn Cecil (Aston Manor) ... 1136

Amendment proposed:—

"To leave out from the word 'That' to the end of the question, in order to add the words, 'this House declines to proceed further with a measure which, while failing to promote the cause of temperance, violates the principles of equity.'"—(*Mr. Cave.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Mr. Leif Jones (Westmoreland, Appleby) ... 1145
Mr. Barnard (Kidderminster) ... 1163
Sir John Kennaway (Devonshire, Honiton) ... 1166
Sir J. Dickson-Poynder (Wiltshire, Chippenham) ... 1172
Mr. Snowden (Blackburn) ... 1180
Mr. Ellis Griffith (Anglesey) ... 1188
Mr. William Rutherford (Liverpool, West Derby) ... 1191
The Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Herbert Samuel, Yorkshire, Cleveland) ... 1202

Motion made, and Question, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Long*)—put, and agreed to.

Debate to be resumed To-morrow.

Summary Jurisdiction (Ireland) Bill.—Read a second time, and committed to a Standing Committee ... 1224

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.—Motion made and Question proposed, "That the House do now adjourn."—(*Mr. George Whiteley.*)

Question put and agreed to.

Adjourned at fourteen minutes after Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS, WEDNESDAY, 29TH APRIL, 1908.

The House met at a quarter before Three of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

London United Tramways Bill. (BY ORDER).—Read a second time, and committed ... 1225

Local Government Provisional Order (No. 3) Bill.—Read the first time; to be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills and to be printed. [Bill 201] ... 1225

Local Government Provisional Orders (No 4) Bill.—Read the first time; to be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 202] ... 1225

Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No 1) Bill.—Read the first time; to be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 203] ... 1225

Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No 2) Bill.—Read the first time; to be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 204] ... 1225

London County Council Money Bill.—Presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills ... 1226

PETITIONS.

Children Bill.—5 Petitions in favour; to lie upon the Table ... 1226

Coal Mines (Eight Hours) (No. 2) Bill.—3 Petitions against; to lie upon the Table ... 1226

Coal Mines (Eight Hours) (No. 2) Bill.—157 Petitions in favour; to lie upon the Table ... 1226

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Dairies (Scotland) Bill.—Petition against; to lie upon the Table 1227

Elementary Education (England and Wales) Bill.—9 Petitions in favour; to lie upon the Table 1227

Licensing Bill.—170 Petitions against; to lie upon the Table 1227

Licensing Bill.—28 Petitions for alteration; to lie upon the Table 1228

Licensing Bill.—696 Petitions in favour; to lie upon the Table 1228

Lights on Vehicles (Scotland) Bill.—Petition against; to lie upon the Table 1231

Liquor Traffic (Local Option) (Scotland) Bill.—Petition against; to lie upon the Table 1231

Liquor Traffic (Local Option) (Scotland) Bill.—17 Petitions in favour; to lie upon the Table 1231

Public Houses (Exclusion of Children) (Scotland) Bill.—4 Petitions in favour; to lie upon the Table 1231

Sale of Foods and Drugs Acts (Amendment) (Scotland) Bill.—Petition against; to lie upon the Table 1232

Sale of Food and Drugs Acts (Amendment) (Scotland) Bill.—Petitions in favour; to lie upon the Table 1232

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday Bill.—11 Petitions in favour; to lie upon the Table 1232

RETURNS, REPORTS, &c.

Explosions (Dinas Main Colliery.)—Report to the Secretary of State for the Home Department; to lie upon the Table 1232

Shop Hours Act, 1904 (County Borough of Croydon).—Order made by the Council of the County Borough of Croydon; to lie upon the Table ... 1232

Education (Scotland) (General Reports).—General Report by the Chief Inspector of the Western Division of Scotland for the year 1907; to lie upon the Table 1232

Government Departments Securities.—Return ordered.

National Physical Laboratory.—Copy ordered, "of Account of Receipts and Expenditure of the National Physical Laboratory 1233

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Hackney Unemployed 1233

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NEW MEMBERS SWORN.

William Joynson-Hicks, esquire, for Borough of Manchester (North-West Division).

Captain the hon. Arthur Cecil Murray, County of Kincardine ... 1267

PUBLIC PETITIONS COMMITTEE.—Second Report brought up, and read; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 1267

NEW BILLS.

Whaling Stations.

Mr. Cathcart Wason (Orkney and Shetland) 1267

Question—"That leave be given to introduce a Bill to provide for the closing of existing whaling stations during the summer herring fishing, and to prohibit whaling stations being established in the future on any part of the shores of Great Britain and Ireland,"—put and agreed to. Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Cathcart Wason, Mr. Gwynn, Mr. Leicester Harmsworth, Dr. Ambrose, Mr. Weir, Mr. O'Malley, Mr. Morton, Mr. Hugh Law, Mr. John Sutherland, and Mr. Ainsworth.

Whaling Stations Bill.—"To provide for the closing of existing whaling stations during the summer herring fishing and to prohibit whaling stations being established in the future on any part of the shores of Great Britain and Ireland," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Wednesday, 13th May, and to be printed. [Bill 205.]

Licensing Bill.—Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment to Question [28th April], "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Which Amendment was,

"To leave out from the word 'That,' to the end of the Question, in order to add the words, 'this House declines to proceed further with a measure which, while failing to promote the cause of temperance, violates the principles of equity'"—(*Mr. Cave*)—instead thereof.

Question again proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Mr. Walter Long (Dublin, S.) 1270
The Solicitor-General (Sir Samuel Evans, Glamorganshire, Mid.) ... 1284
Mr. F. E. Smith (Liverpool, Walton) 1297
Mr. A. E. W. Mason (Coventry) 1309
Mr. James Parker (Halifax) 1316
Mr. Whitbread (Huntingdonshire, Huntingdon) 1319
Mr. Cameron Corbett (Glasgow, Tradeston) 1329
Mr. George Faber (York) 1333

And, it being a quarter past Eight of the Clock, further proceeding was postponed without Question put, pursuant to Standing Order No. 4.

EAST INDIA (EDUCATION).

Mr. Laidlaw (Renfrewshire, E.) 1338
Mr. Hart-Davies (Hackney, N.) 1343
Mr. Keir Hardie (Merthyr Tydvil) 1347
Mr. Rees (Montgomery Boroughs) 1350
Sir J. Jardine (Roxburghshire) 1358

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Sir Henry Craik (Glasgow and Aberdeen Universities) 1361
The Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Charles Hobhouse, Bristol, E.) 1366
Earl Percy (Kensington, S.) 1372

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Licensing Bill.—Postponed Proceeding on Amendment to Question [28th April], "That the Bill be now read a second time," resumed.

Question again proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

And, it being after Eleven of the Clock, and objection being taken to further Proceeding, the debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed To-morrow.

Adjourned at two minutes after Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: THURSDAY, 30TH APRIL, 1908.

The House met at a quarter before Three of the Clock.

NEW WRIT.—New Writ for the County of Salop (Northern of Newport Division), in the room of Colonel the Right Hon. William Slaney Kenyon-Slaney, deceased.—(*Sir Alexander Acland-Hood*) 1373

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Dundalk Urban District Council Bill.—Read the third time, and passed ... 1373

Margate Corporation Bill.—As amended, considered; to be read the third time 1373

Swinton and Mexborough Gas Bill.—As amended, considered; A Clause added; Amendments made.—Bill to be read the third time 1373

South-West Suburban Water Bill (BY ORDER).—Read a second time, and committed 1373

Southwell District Gas Bill.—Cheshire Lines Committee Bill; Great Western Railway (Superannuation Scheme) Bill [Lords]; Garw and Ogmore Gas Bill.—Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 1373

Huddersfield Water Bill [LORDS].—Reported, without Amendment; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.
Bill to be read the third time 1373

PETITIONS.

Children Bill.—2 Petitions in favour; to lie upon the Table 1373

Colton, William George.—Petition of William George Colton, for inquiry into his case; to lie upon the Table 1373

Coal Mines (Eight Hours) (No. 2) Bill.—19 Petitions in favour; to lie upon the Table 1374

Elementary Education (England and Wales) Bill.—9 Petitions in favour; to lie upon the Table 1374

Home Work Regulation Bill.—Petition against; to lie upon the Table ... 1374

Licensing Bill.—238 Petitions against; to lie upon the Table 1374

Licensing Bill.—6 Petitions for alteration; to lie upon the Table 1374

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Licensing Bill.—425 Petitions in favour; to lie upon the Table 1374

Licensing Bill and Children Bill.—Petition in favour; to lie upon the Table 1376

Liquor Traffic (Local Option) (Scotland) Bill.—4 Petitions against; to lie upon the Table 1376

Liquor Traffic (Local Option) (Scotland) Bill.—10 Petitions in favour; to lie upon the Table 1376

Merchandise Marks Bill.—Petition in favour; to lie upon the Table ... 1376

Public Offices Sites (Extension) Bill.—Petition from Messieurs Nicholson, Patterson, and Freeland, against, praying to be heard by council; to lie upon the Table 1376

Sale of Food and Drugs Acts (Amendment) (Scotland) Bill.—Petition against; to lie upon the Table 1377

Sweated Industries Bill.—Petition against; to lie upon the Table 1377

Women's Enfranchisement Bill.—Petition in favour; to lie upon the Table 1377

RETURNS, REPORTS, &c.

Egypt (No. 1, 1908).—Reports by His Majesty's Agent and Consul-General on the Finances, Administration, and condition of Egypt and the Soudan in 1907; to lie upon the Table 1377

Military Prisons.—Report on the discipline and management of military prisons in 1907; to lie upon the Table 1377

Pauperism (England and Wales) (Half-Yearly Statements).—Return presented; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 130] 1377

British Museum.—Return presented; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 131] 1377

Public Income and Expenditure.—Account presented, of the Public Income and Expenditure; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 132] ... 1377

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Military Manœuvres in the New Forest 1378
Ex-Soldiers and the Unemployed Workmen's Act 1378
Sale of Converted Rifles to Rifle Clubs 1378
Scarlet Fever at Tidworth Barracks 1379
Field Artillery Permanent Staff 1379
George Ravenhill, V.C. 1380
Colours for Territorial Battalions 1380
Civil Service Estimates 1380
Postal Employees and the Territorial Force 1381
Inspectors of Explosives and Directorships 1381
Price of Sugar 1382

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Admiralty Dredgers in Egypt 1382
Cordite containing Mercuric Chloride 1383
Naval Armaments 1384

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Mica Boiler Covering Company, Limited 1384
Protection of Canadian Fisheries 1384
Navigation of the Solent 1385
War Office Storehouse Clerks 1386
Indian Army Officers 1386
Trophy Tax 1387
Messrs. Kynochs and Government Contracts 1387
Disturbances in India 1388
The Mohmand Rising 1389
Women Workers on Cingalese Roads 1389
Native Representation in the Natal Parliament 1390
South Australian Act 1390
White settlers in British East Africa 1390
Dismissed Transvaal Civil Servants 1391
Hayti 1391
The Congo Treaty 1392
Great Britain and Siam 1393
Russia and the Case of Edward Howorth, of Blackpool 1393
Turkish Customs Duties 1394
The Aland Islands 1395
Russian Sugar Stores 1395
Russia and the Brussels Convention 1395
Crime in Egypt 1396
International Legislative Council for Egypt 1396
The Budget—Broadening the Basis of Revenue 1397
Income Tax on Investments abroad 1397
Night Wanderers in London 1398
Motor 'Buses in London 1399
North Camberwell Radical Club 1400
Royal Warrant Holders 1401
Tailoring Industry and the Particulars Clause 1401
The Aliens Act 1402
Workmen's Insurance 1403
Motor Fatalities—Misuse of High Roads 1404
Viscount Portman's Marylebone Property... 1405
Shetland Mail Service 1406
Post Office Savings Bank—Telegraphic Withdrawals 1406
Telephone Instruments 1406
Telegraphic Codes 1407
Rhymney Valley Postmen 1408
Foreigners and the Telephone Service 1408
Letter Delays 1409
Wolverhampton Teachers' Examination 1409
Wiltshire Education Authority 1410
Civil Service Salary Increments 1410

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Kitchen Committee's Accounts 1410
Sanitation at Scottish Whaling Stations 1411
Ollaberry Grazing Lands, Shetlands 1411
Shetland Herring Fishery 1412
Foreign Trawlers in the Moray Firth 1412
Bushmills Sub-Postmaster 1413
Education Bill—Mr. Churchill's Pledges 1413
Mr. Churchill's Home Rule Pledges 1414
Business of the House 1416

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).—Sir WILLIAM BRAMPTON GURDON reported from the Committee of Selection.
Reports to lie upon the Table 1416

NEW BILLS.

Education (Consolidation and Amendment) Bill.—To be read a second time upon Thursday next, and to be printed. [Bill 206] 1417

Factory and Workshop Act (1901) Amendment Bill.—To be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 207] 1418

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (SUPPLY).—Ordered, That the proceedings on the Licensing Bill have precedence this day of the Business of Supply.—(*Mr. Asquith*).

Licensing Bill.—Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment to Question [28th April], "That the Bill be now read a second time":—

Which Amendment was,

"To leave out from the word 'That,' to the end of the Question, in order to add the words 'this House declines to proceed further with a measure which, while failing to promote the cause of temperance, violates the principles of equity,'—(*Mr. Cave,*)—instead thereof."

Question again proposed, 'That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Mr. George Faber (*York*) 1418
The Secretary of State for the Home Department (*Mr. Gladstone, Leeds, W.*) 1428
Mr. Austen Chamberlain (*Worcestershire, E.*) 1444
Sir Thomas Whittaker (*Yorkshire, W.R., Spen Valley*) 1462
Mr. Bottomley (*Hackney, S.*) 1484
Mr. Crooks (*Woolwich*) 1499
Mr. Ashley (*Lancashire, Blackpool*) 1508
Mr. Maclean (*Bath*) 1512
Mr. Chaplin (*Surrey, Wimbledon*)... 1518

And, it being Eleven of the Clock, the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed upon Monday next.

Adjourned at four minutes after Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: FRIDAY, 1ST MAY, 1908.

The House met at Twelve noon of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Widnes Corporation Bill.—As amended, considered; Amendments made; Bill to be read the third time 1529

Llanelly Gas Bill [LORDS].—Read a second time, and committed 1529

PETITIONS.

Children Bill—Petitions in favour; to lie upon the Table 1529

Coal Mines (Eight Hours) (No 2) Bill.—45 Petitions in favour; to lie upon the Table 1529

Dairies (Scotland) Bill.—Petition in favour; to lie upon the Table... ... 1529

Education (Scotland) Bill.—Petition against; to lie upon the Table ... 1529

Elementary Education (England and Wales) Bill.—4 Petitions in favour; to lie upon the Table 1529

Licensing Bill.—121 Petitions against; to lie upon the Table 1530

Licensing Bill.—3 Petitions for alteration; to lie upon the Table 1530

Licensing Bill.—402 Petitions in favour; to lie upon the Table 1530

Liquor Traffic (Local Option) (Scotland) Bill.—Petition against; to lie upon the Table 1532

Liquor Traffic (Local Option) (Scotland) Bill.—16 Petitions in favour; to lie upon the Table 1532

Public Houses (Exclusion of Children) (Scotland) Bill.—3 Petitions in favour; to lie upon the Table 1532

Rights of Way (Scotland) Bill.—Petition against; to lie upon the Table 1532

Shops Bill.—Petition against; to lie upon the Table 1532

RETURNS, REPORTS, &c.

Reformatory and Industrial Schools (Great Britain).—Fifty-first Report of His Majesty's Inspector of Reformatory and Industrial Schools; to lie upon the Table 1533

Education (Scotland) Bill.—Memorandum explanatory of the Provisions of the Bill; to lie upon the Table 1533

Irish Railways (Viceregal Commission).—Third Report of the Commissioners; to lie upon the Table 1533

Irish Railways (Viceregal Commission).—Appendix to Third Report of the Commissioners; to lie upon the Table 1533

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Contracts for Mails to the Far East 1533
Military Operations in India 1533
Guns and Shell—Private and Government Manufacture 1534

Shops Bill.—Order for Second Reading read.

Sir Charles Dilke (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean) 1534

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—*(Sir Charles Dilke.)*

The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Gladstone, Leeds, W.) 1543
Mr. H. H. Marks (Kent, Thanet) 1550
Sir Francis Powell (Wigan) 1556

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'now' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day six months.'"—*(Mr. H. H. Marks.)*

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

Mr. Summerbell (Sunderland) 1561
Sir F. Banbury (City of London) 1562
Mr. Scott (Ashton-under-Lyne) 1572
Sir F. Cawley (Lancashire, Prestwich) 1573
Mr. Fell (Great Yarmouth) 1574
Mr. Seddon (Lancashire, Newton)... 1576
Mr. Harold Cox (Preston) 1581
Mr. John Ward (Stoke-on-Trent) 1588
Mr. Steadman (Finsbury, Central) 1589
The Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Herbert Samuel, Yorkshire, Cleveland) 1592
Mr. Cochrane (Ayrshire, N.) 1600

Sir CHARLES DILKE rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

Question put, "That the Question be now put."

The House divided:—Ayes, 197; Noes 48. (Division List No. 73).

Question put accordingly, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

The House divided:—Ayes, 190; Noes 45. (Division List No. 74).

Main Question put, and agreed to. Bill read a second time.

Motion made, and Question put, "That the Bill be committed to a Committee of the Whole House."—(*Mr. Herbert Samuel*).

The House divided:—Ayes, 139; Noes, 23. (Division List No. 75).

Bill committed to a Committee of the Whole House for Monday next.

Intoxicating Liquor Licences (England and Wales) (Transfers.)—Address for "Return relating to the transfer of Licences for the sale of Intoxicating Liquor to be consumed on the premises in England and Wales, showing for every licensing district the number of applications under Section 4 and Section 14 of the Alehouses Act, 1828, granted in respect of full or Alehouse Licences and of other On-Licences during the year ended the 31st day of December, 1907; and, in cases where the same licence was so transferred more than once during that period, the number of times any licence was so transferred."—(*Mr. Charles Roberts*) 1611

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES)—Sir WILLIAM BRAMPTON GURDON reported from the Committee of Selection: That they had discharged the following Members from Standing Committee A (in respect of the Summary Jurisdiction (Ireland) Bill): Mr. Attorney-General, Mr. Secretary Gladstone, and Mr. Herbert Samuel; and had appointed in substitution (in respect of the Summary Jurisdiction (Ireland) Bill: Mr. Birrell, Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland, and Mr. Solicitor-General for Ireland.

Report to lie upon the Table 1612

Whereupon Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House without Question put, pursuant to Standing Order No. 3.

Adjourned at one minute after Five o'clock till Monday next.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: MONDAY, 4TH MAY, 1908.

The House met at a quarter before Three of the Clock.

NEW WRITS.

For Burgh of Dundee, in the room of Right hon. Edmund Robertson, K.C. (Chiltern Hundreds).—(*Mr. Whiteley.*)

Stirling district of burghs. Right hon. Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, G.C.B., deceased.—(*Mr. Whiteley*) 1613

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QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Naval Accidents ... 1638
Submarine Boats—Safety Arrangements ... 1639
The Navy ... 1639
Transport for War Times ... 1639
Torpedo Destroyers ... 1640
Protection for Scottish Fisheries ... 1640
Navigation of the Solent ... 1641
Cordite for the Navy ... 1641
Cordite Tests ... 1641
The Attestation Oath ... 1642
Militia and Volunteer Officers ... 1642
Ranges for Territorial Artillery ... 1643
Army Establishment ... 1643
Home Infantry Establishment ... 1644
Field Artillery Brigades ... 1644
Artillery Brigade Training ... 1645
Military Camps ... 1645
Territorial Artillery Guns ... 1646
Garrison Artillery Volunteers ... 1646
Breech Loaders for the Territorial Artillery ... 1646
Territorial Field Artillery Adjutants ... 1647
Territorial Battalion Colours ... 1647
Territorial Battalion Bands ... 1647
Volunteer Establishment ... 1648
Separation Allowances for Territorial Camps ... 1648
Law of Imprisonment in Natal ... 1649
Indian Immigration in Natal ... 1649
Canadian Immigration Regulations ... 1649
National Sleeping Sickness Bureau ... 1650
Expropriation of Lagos Natives ... 1650
Abeokuta Treaty ... 1650
White Labour in the Transvaal Mines ... 1651
Cakijana ... 1652
Lord Raleigh's Committee on Explosives ... 1653
Select Committees on Police Day's Rest ... 1653
Carmarthen Prison ... 1653
New Factory Inspectors ... 1654
Factory Inspectors' Qualifications ... 1655
Fatal Accidents in Factories and Workshops ... 1655
Imprisonment of Manchester Unemployed Leaders ... 1656
Coal Mines (Eight Hours) Bill ... 1657
Hamstead Colliery Disaster ... 1657
Aliens Act—Mr. Churchill's Pledge ... 1657

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Midwifery 1659
Rateable Value of Licensed Premises 1659
Canadian Mail Contracts 1660
Sales of Weed Killers 1661
Royal Commissions on Horse Breeding 1661
Criminal Appeal Act—Shorthand Writers' fees 1662
New Forest Fires 1662
Public Expenditure 1663
South African War Debt 1664
Canadian Mail Contract 1665
Morrish Moor Lands 1665
Squatters in the Island of Lewis 1665
Smoking Chimneys in the Island of Lewis 1666
Kingston Pier Dispute 1666
National Expenditure 1666
Ministerial Salaries 1667
Mr. Churchill's Home Rule Declaration 1667
Irish Universities Bill 1669
Licensing Bill 1669

PERSONAL EXPLANATIONS.

Mr. George Faber (*York*) 1670
The Parliamentary Secretary to the Treasury (*Mr. George Whiteley, Yorkshire, W.R., Pudsey*) 1671

Costs in Criminal Cases Bill.—Reported, with Amendments, from Standing Committee C.

Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 134.]

Minutes of the Proceedings of the Standing Committee to be printed [No. 134.]

Bill, as amended (by the Standing Committee), to be taken into consideration upon Thursday next, and to be printed. [Bill 208.] 1674

Municipal Representation Bill [LORDS.]—Read the first time; to be read a second time upon Wednesday, and to be printed. [Bill 209.] 1674

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES) (CHAIRMEN'S PANEL).

Mr. STUART WORTLEY reported from the Chairmen's Panel; That they had discharged Mr. Stuart Wortley from being Chairman of Standing Committee A, and had appointed Sir Francis Channing to act as Chairman of Standing Committee A in his place.

Mr. STUART WORTLEY further reported; That they had discharged Mr. Eugene Wason from being Chairman of the Standing Committee on Scottish Bills, and had appointed Sir William Holland to act as Chairman of the Standing Committee on Scottish Bills in his place.
Reports to lie upon the Table 1674

NEW BILL.

Workmen's Eviction (Trade Disputes) Bill.—To be read a second time upon Wednesday, 20th May, and to be printed. [Bill 210] 1675

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PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

DIVISIONAL ORDER BILLS (STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE THERETO COMPLIED WITH).—Metropolitan Police Provisional Order Bill.
Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time To-morrow 1613

Margate Corporation Bill; Swinton and Mexborough Gas Bill.—Read the third time, and passed 1613

Manchester Corporation Bill.—As amended, considered; to be read the third time 1613

Argentine North-Eastern Railway Bill [LORDS]; Cardiff Railway Bill [Lords]; St. Marylebone Borough Council (Superannuation) Bill [Lords]; Skegness Urban District Council Bill [Lords].—Read a second time, and committed 1613

PETITIONS.

Children Bill.—4 Petitions in favour: to lie upon the Table 1613

Coal Mines (Eight Hours) (No. 2) Bill.—79 Petitions in favour; to lie upon the Table 1614

Elementary Education (England and Wales) Bill.—Petition in favour; to lie upon the Table 1614

Hours of Labour (Surfacemen) Bill.—Petition against; to lie upon the Table 1614

Licensing Bill.—94 Petitions against; to lie upon the Table 1614

Licensing Bill.—16 Petitions for alteration; to lie upon the Table 1614

Licensing Bill.—404 Petitions in favour; to lie upon the Table 1614

Licensing Bill and Liquor Traffic (Local Option) (Scotland) Bill.—Petition in favour; to lie upon the Table 1617

Liquor Traffic (Local Option) (Scotland) Bill.—4 Petitions against; to lie upon the Table 1617

Liquor Traffic (Local Option) (Scotland) Bill.—18 Petitions in favour; to lie upon the Table 1617

Merchandise Marks Bill.—Petition for alteration; to lie upon the Table ... 1617

Public-Houses (Exclusion of Children) (Scotland) Bill.—3 Petitions in favour; to lie upon the Table 1617

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday Bill.—Petitions in favour; to lie upon the Table 1617

RETURNS, REPORTS, &c.

Irish Land Commission (Proceedings).—Return of Proceedings [by Command]; to lie upon the Table... 1617

Deaths from Alcohol (Ireland).—Return presented, relative thereto; to lie upon the Table 1618

Public Records.—Sixty-ninth Annual Report of the Deputy Keeper of the Public Records; to lie upon the Table 1618

Education (Scotland) (General Reports). General Report by the Chief Inspector of the Southern Division of Scotland; to lie upon the Table ... 1618

Board of Agriculture and Fisheries.—Annual Report of Proceedings under the Acts relating to Sea Fisheries; to lie upon the Table 1618

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Railway Servants Hours of Labour.—Copy presented, of Return, in pursuance of Section 4 of the Regulation of Railways Act, 1889, of Railway Servants; to lie upon the Table 1618

Light Railways Act, 1896.—Report of the Proceedings of the Board of Trade and of the Proceedings of the Light Railway Commissioners; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 133] 1618

East India (Army and Population).—Address for "Return showing the strength of the Army in India, European and Native, and the extent of the population and area under British rule in India 1618

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

The Pacific Cable 1619
Terms of Superannuation to Professors of Irish Universities 1619
Belfast and Dublin—Senates 1620
Increase of Pay for Adult Night Messengers 1621
Public House Valuation 1622
Coal Exports... 1623
Subsidy for Cultivation of Beet Sugar 1623
Convictions for Drunkenness in England and Wales 1623
Pay of Indian Medical Officers 1625
Date of Indian Budget 1625
Evicted Tenants—Case of Mr. Patrick Kidney 1626
Committal of Alexander Jennings to Meath Industrial School 1626
Proposed Irish University—Representation of the Methodist Church 1627
Retirement of Sir Antony Macdonell 1628
Irish University Bill... 1628
Sligo Board of Guardians—Speech of Mr. John Gilmartin 1629
Attack on Mr. C. G. Mahon at Dysart 1629
Reinstatement of Templemore Evicted Tenants 1629
Irish Evicted Tenants—Case of John Keating, on the Ely Estate 1630
Cattle Driving—Speech by Mr. J. Keaveny at Tulsk 1630
Intimidation of Mr. Robert Boyle 1631
Recommendation of Belfast Health Commission 1631
Erection of Labourers' Cottages 1632
Funeral of Second Corporal C. H. Dillon, Royal Engineers 1632
Archbishop of Cyprus—Delay in making Appointment... 1633
Compulsory Acquisition of Crown Lands for Small Holdings 1633
Duty on Lumber shipped from United States to France 1634
Imports of Aectone 1634
Postal Deliveries at Limavady 1634
Local Stamping Office for Norwich... 1635
Stow Union—Surcharge of Outdoor Relief 1635
Unfunded Debt 1637
Case of Mr. C. W. Allan, Indian Forest Service 1637

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE.

Ordered, that Mr. Runciman be discharged from the Public Accounts Committee.

Ordered, That Mr. Hobhouse be added to the Committee.—(*Mr. Whiteley.*) 1675

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (LICENSING BILL).—Ordered, That the Proceedings on the Licensing Bill, if under discussion at Eleven o'clock this night, be not interrupted under the Standing Order (Sittings of the House). (*Mr. Asquith*) 1675

Licensing Bill.—Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Amendment to Question [28th April], "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Which Amendment was—

"To leave out from the word 'That' to the end of the Question, in order to add the words 'This House declines to proceed further with a measure which, while failing to promote the cause of temperance, violates the principles of equity.'"—(*Mr. Cave*)—instead thereof.

Question again proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Mr. Chaplin (*Surrey, Wimbledon*) 1676
The Chancellor of the Exchequer (*Mr. Lloyd-George, Carnarvon Boroughs*) 1679
Mr. Lyttelton (*St. George's, Hanover Square*) 1699
Mr. Herbert Roberts (*Denbighshire, W.*) 1712
Lord R. Cecil (*Marylebone, E.*) 1716
Sir Randal Cremer (*Shoreditch, Haggerston*) 1725
Mr. Harwood (*Bolton*) 1732
Mr. Rufus Isaacs (*Reading*) 1739
Mr. Belloc (*Salford, S.*) 1748
Mr. Bridgeman (*Shropshire, Oswestry*) 1751
Mr. Arthur Henderson (*Durham, Barnard Castle*) 1755
Sir E. Carson (*Dublin University*)... 1761
The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (*Mr. Asquith, Fifeshire, E.*) 1778

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 397; Noes, 147. (Division List No, 76.)

Main Question put.

The House divided,—Ayes, 394; Noes, 148. (Division List No. 76.)

Bill read a second time.

Bill committed to a Committee of the Whole House for Monday next.—(*Mr. Asquith.*)

Married Women's Property Bill.—Read a second time, and committed to a Standing Committee 1797

MONUMENT TO SIR HENRY CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN.—Committee to consider an humble Address to be presented to His Majesty praying that His Majesty will give directions that a Monument be erected at the Public Charge in the Collegiate Church of St. Peter's, Westminster, to the memory of the Right Hon. Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman (King's Recommendation signified), upon Monday, 18th May.—(*Mr. Asquith*) 1797

And it being after half-past Eleven of the Clock on Monday evening, Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House without Question put, pursuant to Standing Order.

Adjourned at ten minutes after Twelve o'clock.

END OF TABLE OF CONTENTS TO VOL. CLXXXVII.

VOLUME CLXXXVII.

ERRATUM.

In Col. 317, line 46, *for* "Mr. Hudson" *read* "Mr. Nannetti (Dublin College Green)."

THE

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(*AUTHORISED EDITION*)

IN THE

THIRD SESSION OF THE *TWENTY-EIGHTH PARLIAMENT* OF THE UNITED
KINGDOM OF *GREAT BRITAIN* AND *IRELAND*, APPOINTED TO MEET
THE TWENTY-NINTH DAY OF JANUARY IN THE EIGHTH YEAR OF THE
REIGN OF

HIS MAJESTY KING EDWARD VII.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

FIFTH VOLUME OF SESSION 1908.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Monday, 30*th March*, 1908.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House, That the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificates from the Examiners that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with:—Conway and Colwyn Bay Joint Water Board; Derby Gas; Stockport Corporation; Rochdale Corporation.

The same were ordered to lie on the Table.

City of Glasgow Bill.—Brought from the Commons, read 1ª, and referred to the Examiners.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

TURKEY, NO. 1 (1908).

Further correspondence respecting proposals by His Majesty's Government for reforms in Macedonia.

RAILWAY AND CANAL TRAFFIC ACTS, 1854–1894.

Nineteenth Annual Report of the Railway and Canal Commission, with Appendix.

HOUSING CONDITIONS (SCOTLAND).

Return showing the housing conditions of the population of Scotland.

BIRTHS, MARRIAGES, AND DEATHS, AND VACCINATION (SCOTLAND).

Fifty-third Annual Report of the Registrar-General for Scotland, for the year 1907, and Forty-third Annual Report on Vaccination.

LOCAL TAXATION (IRELAND).

Returns for the year 1906–1907.

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

COURT OF PROBATE DIVISION (HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE (IRELAND)).

Annual account of receipts and disbursements, for the year ended 31st December, 1907.

SHOP HOURS ACT, 1904.

Closing order made by the urban district council of Donaghadee.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL [H.L.].

[SECOND READING].

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

THE LORD BISHOP OF ST. ASAPH: My Lords, in moving the Second Reading of the Bill which stands in my name I desire briefly to make clear my position and purpose in this matter. I am solely responsible for this Bill. I pledge and am pledged to no one, and I compromise no one in this or in any other place. The Bill, therefore, comes before your Lordships with nothing and nobody to recommend it but its own provisions. Those provisions are largely embodied in a Bill which your Lordships read a second time without a division in 1904. That Bill was welcomed by Lord Tweedmouth, speaking then in the absence of Lord Spencer, as Leader of the Opposition. The noble Lord said—

> "He welcomed the Bill as a message of peace, and he hoped that later on it might be possible to expand it into a concordat."

I venture to think, my Lords, that the moment for attempting such an expansion has at last arrived. One of the main features in the Bill of 1904, was, what for brevity I will call, the parental solution of the religious problem. During the last four years a complete discovery has been made of the fact that the children in our elementary schools not only have parents, but that those parents have as much right and claim to determine the religion taught to their children as any other parent in the land.

The present moment seems opportune for another reason. Unless I am gravely mistaken, the country is weary of this prolonged controversy, and reasonable and moderate men are eager for a settlement and feel that the time has come to bring about the composing of this conflict of claims. But if there is to be a settlement that settlement must be a concordat, the virtue of which lies in the fact that, unlike a victory or defeat, it avoids the humiliation of either side and the bitterness which would ensue from such humiliation. But neither the hopes of the past nor the present sense of weariness have chiefly impelled me to undertake the task of presenting this Bill before your Lordships' House. I come from a diocese where there are a large number of voluntary schools. In my own county voluntary schools are in an overwhelming majority. The spectacle of the educational discord constantly before my eyes supplies my main and sustaining motive in bringing this matter before your Lordships' House.

Let me illustrate our present condition from the playground. In the early days of Rugby football I once saw a great match in which both sides were fiercely hacking each other while the football lay many yards away untouched and unheeded. And this is what is happening in Wales to-day. The real business of education is being neglected, and those who ought to be engaged in its promotion are concentrating their energies upon a contemptible and squalid endeavour to persecute, to irritate, and to hamper. You have already had in this House abundant specimens of this sordid strife. I do not think that any one who really cares for the true interests of education can view with anything but the deepest humiliation the progress of this game in which the children are treated as pawns.

For my purpose to-day a retrospect which shall be made as brief as possible seems necessary. Up to 1870, the system of elementary education in this country was voluntary. The Church was the first to take this great work in hand. The State stepped in later when the working-man, armed with a vote, became an object of political interest. These things are quoted as reminiscences. They would be arguments if gratitude were a political asset. The Act of 1870 was avowedly supplementary in character. The Act of 1902 aimed at nothing less than the establishment of a national system of education. That Act did not claim finality, which probably belongs only to destructive legislation. But I believe that the verdict of history will be that

that Act was one of the greatest educational measures ever placed on the Statute Book of this country. It must be admitted that that Act rendered the long continuance of the dual system difficult, if not impossible. It has always been a marvel to me that the opponents of that system welcomed the Act with so little gratitude. No doubt that Act, while subverting the dual system, did not remove all possible grievances.

The Bill which I introduced in 1904 grew out of an attempt which was made in North Wales by representatives of both sides to adopt a concordat which would have removed all alleged greivances. The terms of that attempted concordat were that in all the schools in the area concerned there should be a general syllabus of religious instruction on the lines of the London School Board syllabus taught from 9 to 9.45 a.m. on four days in the week in provided schools and on three days a week in the non-provided schools; that there should be facilities in provided schools for unrestricted religious teaching to the children of those parents who desired it on one day, that on two days a week there should be facilities given in the non-provided schools for unrestricted religious teaching, and that there should be an annual examination in religious knowledge. It was also agreed upon, as an experiment, that the teachers might, if willing, give the unrestricted religious teaching in provided as well as non-provided schools. The conference at which these terms were discussed was presided over by Sir Francis Edwards, and the terms quoted were agreed to by Mr. Lloyd-George. The concordat fell through, not from any misgiving as to the sincerity of those who offered those terms, but for what I considered the insuperable objection that the concordat lacked legal sanction and legal security. It was in order to gain this sanction and security that I introduced the Bill in 1904, which your Lordships read a second time. The experience of the last four years has only strengthened the conviction I then felt that if the Bill had passed it would have ended the troubles which have since then hampered our educational progress. For these reasons I have ventured once more to submit for your consideration a Bill which embodies that solution.

The Bill accepts, without qualification, public control and the abolition of tests as conditions of recognition. In passing, let me say that I much wish that a larger measure of public control had been delegated to the localities interested in each school. One of the results of the Act of 1902 has been to dry up, in the case of provided and non-provided schools alike, local interest, and to concentrate all personal interest in and contact with the individual school in the paid officials of the county authority. This is not a party question, but I am convinced that the fact itself reveals a detriment to education. Coming to the question of tests, the Bill accepts their unqualified abolition. The country is now familiar with the arguments on this question, and it has clearly shown its unwillingness to impose a religious test for those who are now in the great majority of cases civil servants.

There is one aspect of this question to which I desire to addreess myself. It is urged, with unanswerable force, that the teacher who is to give religious instruction must believe in what he teaches. Is a legal test the only or even the best way of securing this? Surely history, for example the history of our own Universities, shows how friable these legal tests were, and how often, instead of being a security for belief, they proved a stimulous to insincerity. There is only one test which is worth anything in these matters. That test is the honour of the teacher himself. If a teacher of his own free will signifies formally that he desires to give religious instruction you have the best security for sincerity which any honest man can give you. If you are dealing with a dishonest man, all tests and engagements are equally worthless. But this Bill asks for the unqualified abolition of tests. As I shall endeavour to prove later, that abolition is not unqualified if you tell the teacher at one moment that he is not of necessity obliged to give any religious instruction and then the next moment tell him that even if he wishes to do so he is obliged not to give one type of religious instruction.

I now come to one of the essential points in the Bill. I have shown that it establishes universal council schools.

I venture to submit that you cannot have universal religious freedom in these council schools unless you also establish the right of universal facilities. Personally I regard the granting of general facilities as absolutely indispensable to any permanent settlement. Your Lordships will remember that in the Bill of 1906 a miserly dole of facilities was attempted. When Mr. Birrell came to expound that part of his Bill it struck me that he was all the time thinking of some other and more perfect arrangement which provided universal facilities, and I came to the conclusion that when Mr. Birrell reached the House of Commons he discovered that he had put the wrong Bill in his pocket by mistake.

In dealing with the question of universal facilities I start with two propositions which I believe will command almost universal acceptance. This country is resolved that religious instruction shall be given in its elementary schools. If religious instruction is to be given in our schools, clearly it must be real and substantial, and not less honoured or cared for than any other part of the instruction given. I think it can be shown that for carrying out these two principles facilities are indispensable. The history of the last thirty-eight years fortifies that statement. Let me briefly recapitulate. In 1870, the Nonconformists in England generally, and in Wales with scarcely an exception, looked with favouring eyes on a secular system. Mr. Foster, in his speech on the Second Reading, quoted a resolution from Nonconformist ministers in Wales in which they demanded that any system of national education should be made secular and compulsory. What happened in Wales universally and in England generally is a parable written for our learning. In Wales the school boards began by being secular. But the example and the felt influence of the religious instruction given in the Church schools, slowly but surely induced the Nonconformists to recant this error. I admit the process has been slow. At first religious instruction in our board schools began, and still in many places continues, to consist of Bible reading without note or comment. I speak from personal knowledge. The whole school were assembled while the teacher read out four or five verses of the Bible to a listless and unattending crowd of children. Such a sham is as bad for the teacher as it is for the children.

Now, I am continually asked, not only by Nonconformists, but by Churchmen also, Why are you not satisfied with simple Bible teaching? My reply is that I desire it to be simple, and I desire it to be teaching. The real question at issue when you get down to the bedrock of this controversy is this. Are you going to be satisfied with a make-believe religious instruction which will meet a passing sentiment and soon disappear altogether from your schools, or are you going securely to safeguard that instruction so that it may form a real, sound, and solid foundation upon which the character of your children may be built up in Christian principles? The voluntary schools, if they have done nothing else, have rendered this mighty service to the country, that they have been mainly instrumental in driving secularism out of our Board schools. They have been our safeguard in the past. Universal facilities will be our safeguard in the future. If the religious instruction given in any of the universal council schools is known by the parents—and parents quickly find these things out—to be unreal and perfunctory, then the lever of universal facilities will come in to redress this defect. But there is one other point about universal facilities. The main controversy on the religious question has turned upon the character of the religious instruction to be taught to the child. Never have I heard in all this controversy any public man venture to deny that the one person who has the right to settle the question of the character of the religious instruction taught to his child is the parent. This Bill turns upon the recognition of the right of the parent.

There are those, for whose zeal and conviction I have the profoundest respect, who will take exception to this Bill on the ground that it allows the State to endow one form, and one form only, of religious instruction. I admit at once that in the abstract it appears to be unjust that the State should pay only for the teaching of undenominationalism. If we were arguing in the abstract, it might be logical to contend that compulsory education, whether secular or religious, was unjust; but we live in a world of history and of facts. I propose to deal with this, the hardest part of our problem, by applying to its solution, not abstract and *a priori* deductions, but approaching it with that historial method which commends itself to our day and generation.

The roots of this religious controversy in education lie deep down in the past. An inquiry ordered by Parliament in 1846 into the state of education in Wales undoubtedly proves that the elements of this controversy were even then apparent, and to the observant it was clear that the conflict which has since divided us was inevitable. With this problem Parliament first dealt in 1870. A perusal of the debates on the Act of 1870 will show how large a part was occupied by the very controversy that divides us to-day. In the historical speech which Mr. Gladstone made on the Third Reading, in answer to Mr. Miall, he said—

> "We have excluded something from the (rate-aided) schools, and what has been so excluded is something peculiarly characteristic of the Church of England and objected to by Dissenters."

I quote these words because they give the essence of the compromise of 1870. The Government, by accepting the Cowper-Temple Clause, said, in so many words, to the Nonconformists: We give you the board schools, from which the religious teaching of which you disapprove will be excluded, in which the undenominational teaching of which you approve will be given and paid for by the rates, while the supporters of voluntary schools will have to make up by voluntary contributions for the loss of the rate, and at the same time in districts where both schools exist will still have to pay their share of the rate.

The board schools were started with grant and rate, and the voluntary schools continued with grant only. The compromise worked on the whole fairly well. Undenominationalism was established and endowed, and the Church was left free to teach her own children in her own schools and largely at her own cost. If that compromise is to be abandoned, it is obvious that it would be unjust to Churchmen to retain those conditions in the compromise which the Nonconformists approved and accepted, while abandoning those which Churchmen accepted. If undenominationalism is still to remain rate-aided, it is surely asking very little in return that Churchmen should still be free to teach, and that Church parents should still be free to have their children taught, their own faith at the cost of their own denomination.

Now it is maintained that it is unfair to allow undenominationalism to continue to be the only form of religious instruction paid for by the State. As a matter of logical and abstract discussion, I repeat that that contention seems to be difficult to answer. But a full consideration of the facts and of the history of the compromise on this question removes that difficulty. If it were proposed that all denominations should now pay for the religious instruction of their own children I consider it would be unfair and unjust to disendow suddenly the undenominationalists, and to impose upon the Nonconformists a burden and a duty which they have not been called upon before to bear and to discharge. There is no concealing the fact that in 1870, while the State gave to the voluntary schools freedom and recognition and encouragement, it gave at the same time a monopoly of State aid to the undenominationalist. I read this morning in one of the newspapers a letter in which it was stated that this Bill proposes to endow undenominationalism. I confess I read that statement with amazement. Undenominationalism has been endowed for the last thirty-eight years. I know well that there are those who, for reasons which all must respect, object in theory as well as in practice to the State defining the religious instruction given to the children in our schools, and recoil with something like abhorrence from a canonical authority given by statute to this or that syllabus of religious instruction. But even this difficulty, which I both admit and feel, is not insuperable.

I would much prefer to call this type of instruction interdenominational rather than undenominational, and personally I would most gladly welcome any proposal which would provide for the framing of the syllabus of this religious instruction to be drawn up by an inter-denominational committee, representative of the various denominations in each local area. As a member of the local education authority for Flintshire, I had the honour of being elected chairman of the committee appointed to draw up a syllabus of religious instruction for that county. Representatives of the leading Nonconformist bodies were on that committee, and I do not hesitate to say that the syllabus upon which we unanimously agreed was one that Churchmen could not only loyally but gratefully accept. Anyone who has followed the meetings of the Student Movement in this country, its meetings last year at Conisheads and this year at Liverpool, will thankfully recognise that there is a vast and precious field of co-operation open and common to those who are prepared to meet and work together in a spirit of cordial Christian fellowship.

The experience of other countries must, of course, be quoted with reservation, but, making the largest allowance for these, I derive hope and strength from the fact that in America inter-denominationalism is a great and growing power for the spread of Christianity. When I consider the compromise which is offered by this Bill to the Church of England the task of justification is much easier. We ask for no privilege whatever. We are content to allow the undenominationalists to retain undisturbed the full benefits given them under the Act of 1870. We are willing to bring our schools into line and to incorporate them in one national system, and we only ask that when these schools are all of one type and under one public control, and supported by the rates of Churchmen and Nonconformists, Church parents should have accorded to them the freedom to secure for their children three days in the week within school hours that religious instruction which they desire, and we ask for the freedom to be allowed to pay ourselves for this instruction.

The Lord Bishop of St. Asaph.

I now turn to the question of the teachers. In the Bill now before your Lordships' House it is proposed that the teachers may be free to notify to their local education authority in writing their willingness to give religious instruction. I venture to submit that if the teacher is to be permitted to give the undenominational instruction, he must be equally free to give the denominational instruction. The State is to pay the teacher for giving undenominational instruction, but surely it is a contention which savours of intolerance to maintain that the State would be just and fair if it restricted the freedom of the teacher, and said: Although you are not paid for doing so by the State, the State will not allow you, even if you wish to do so, to give religious instruction to those children whose parents desire it and whose denomination pay for it. If the teachers are not to be allowed to give any religious instruction, then you have a purely secular staff, and I venture to say that by doing this you have laid the foundation for a purely secular system.

I am well aware that in Wales at the present time the teachers in the council schools are appointed not only upon educational grounds, and there is often just ground of complaint that secondary considerations dictate these appointments. On the other hand, I am convinced that when a settlement has once been reached and sectarian animosities allayed, there would be more hope of a just consideration of all concerned. One thing is obvious, if there is danger from this religious bias operating in the appointment of teachers, that bias is just as likely to operate in favour of teachers who would be known to be in sympathy with the undenominational rather than with the denominational type of teaching. On this question, however, we must not forget that the teacher himself has a right to freedom and fair play.

Many of the best teachers in this country at the present time regard the religious instruction which they give as the most precious instrument they have for building up character. It is proposed that these teachers are still to continue in their present positions even when their schools have become provided schools. Is it freedom, is it justice, to tell these men and women that for the rest of their professional lives they are to be excluded by law from giving to the children whose parents desire it that instruction which they deem most valuable, and the giving of which they regard as their most sacred privilege? Great importance in this controversy has been attached to the abolition of tests. If tests are to be abolished the abolition must be unqualified and complete; but if you tell the teachers "You are free to give this type of religious teaching but you are not free to give that type," then you are imposing a fresh test, and although a negative test, one of an equally restrictive character. This Bill asks for the complete freedom of the teacher, and it does not seem to me that you make a man free when you take off a handcuff and put on a muzzle.

I have endeavoured to deal as fully as time permits with the religious question. Once this question has been settled and securities have been given for preserving substantially the integrity of religious teaching, and facilities have been provided for the just recognition of denominational claims, I believe the main difficulty will have been removed from the settlement of what I may call the property question. The Church of England has built and maintained her schools primarily for securing a rightful place for religious teaching in the education of her children. They value those buildings as instruments for the fulfilment of that sacred purpose and trust. Keeping that thought in mind, I propose to give the trustees freedom in this matter, and a free hand with regard to their buildings.

The Bill proposes to give the trustees of the school-house of an elementary school the power to transfer, by agreement, if they wish to do so, the school-house to the local education authority to be conducted as a public elementary school, reserving to the trustees the use of the school on Saturdays and Sundays and not less than two other days in the week out of school hours. Unless provided for otherwise, the trustees will be liable for any damage beyond ordinary wear and tear caused to the room and furniture, while they will be responsible for leaving the room after they have used it in a proper condition for school purposes. If after the transfer of a school-house the local education authority fail to carry out the terms of the transfer, the Board of Education, if they are satisfied of such failure, shall, by order, set aside the transfer. So far the terms of transfer are clear. The trustees are perfectly free to transfer if they like.

But there remains the question of the position of the local education authority. Must they take over the school-house when offered to them by the trustees? Now it is clear that trustees might in some cases stipulate for terms which were unreasonable or offer for transfer buildings which had become unsuitable, while under a compulsory scheme of transfer the local education authority might reject reasonable terms or impose unreasonable conditions. The Bill proposes to solve this difficulty by giving either party an appeal to the Board of Education, and it will be the duty of the Board of Education, after considering all the circumstances of the case, including the interests of education and the economy of the rates, to settle the terms of an arrangement, and make such order as they think fit for carrying it out. It will be observed that the trustees are not in any case bound to transfer, and even when they do transfer no order shall be valid which purports to convey or to vest in the local education authority any greater interest in the school-house than the trustees are willing to convey. There is, therefore, no element of confiscation. Practically I believe these provisions would work out smoothly. Few trustees would desire, when the religious question has been settled, to retain their school-houses, and not allow them to be used as public elementary schools. On the other hand very few local authorities, at any rate in Wales, would desire to incur the expense of new buildings and to reject the transfer of the non-provided school.

I know that it is the fashion to depreciate the value of our rural schoolhouses. That depreciation is based upon calculations less of fact than of controversy. Large sums have been spent upon those buildings within the last four years.

In my own diocese the school-houses could not be replaced for less than £300,000. The Bill provides that in any transferred school the teachers in the school at the time of such transfer shall continue to hold office by the same tenure and on the same terms and conditions, as far as they are consistent with the terms of this Act, as before the transfer. I confess that the section incorporated from elsewhere which deals with the case of teachers in an existing voluntary school who may lose their employment by reason of the school ceasing to be an elementary school in consequence of this Act is not altogether satisfactory to me. I trust that if this Bill were passed and a general settlement arrived at, that there would be very few, if any, such cases to deal with. As the clause stands the compensation provided for teachers so deprived of employment is inadequate, and I trust that this defect may be amended.

One matter I desire to refer to briefly, but with all the emphasis I can command. The Church of England will never accept a settlement which does not include an arrangement which will meet generously as they deserve to be met, the claims of Roman Catholics. I have endeavoured to explain the main provisions of this Bill, and I believe that in the acceptance and development of the principles embodied in the Bill lies the way of safety and of peace.

The Bill may fairly claim to be marked by simplicity, uniformity, and efficiency. The solution which it offers of our problem is so simple that he who runs can read. In place of a dual system, which results no longer in a wholesome competition but in diverting men's thoughts and energies from the fruitful work of education into the sterilizing indulgence of sectarian animosities, it introduces for the first time uniformity into our system of elementary education. I venture also to say that the provisions in this Bill would materially and profoundly contribute to the promotion of educational efficiency. Looking at this subject for one moment as a Churchman, I hold that the great Church of England, deeply concerned as she is in this matter, cannot, while this controversey is proceeding, continue to shelter herself behind a wall of criticism, but that she must come out into the open, and in a large and generous spirit show her willingness and her capacity to offer terms which all true friends of education may be able to accept without detriment to conscience or justice. I beg to move.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^a."—(*The Lord Bishop of St. Asaph.*)

*THE LORD ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY: My Lords, I am told it would be for the general convenience of the House that I should say something on the Bill at this stage rather than later. My first duty is to make clear—a duty which is scarcely necessary after the exceedingly lucid and powerful speech just delivered—that this Bill must not be regarded as a Bill officially put forward by the Church of England through the Episcopate. Personally I accept no responsibility for this Bill except to this extent—that, knowing through his characteristic courtesy what my brother the Bishop of St. Asaph was going to do, I did not feel justified, in the extremely critical condition of the educational controversy, in opposing him in again attempting what he tried to do in 1904. I will go further, and say that everyone interested in educational questions owes a debt to that man, be he bishop or any one else, who at such a juncture comes forward with a constructive proposal of a thoughtful and practical kind towards the solution of the question.

I have no special affection for this Bill just as it now stands. It does not seem to me to cover the ground. Parts of it are little more than an outlined sketch, and in the filling of them up we should undoubtedly find ourselves in the presence of wide differences of opinion, and that on some of the most important points in controvercy. But, though the Bill may be inadequate or even unsatisfactory, its proposals, as it seems to me, take us further along the road towards an agreement than any constructive plan which is now definitely before the country. Whether they are fair or unfair, the attempt is at least being made on large principles which are at once intelligible and simple. It avoids the bewilderment of the multiplied details, the exceptions, and the compensations which, in a desire to act fairly all round, have cumbered the discussion and would have cumbered the ultimate working of various measures which have at different times been before the House.

May I, in nakedest outline, remind your Lordships of the statistical condition of our problem as it stands? We have in England, roughly, 20,500 elementary schools. Of this number about 6,900 are provided, or council schools, whose fabric belongs to the State, and about 13,500 are non-provided, or, to use the official term which still runs, voluntary schools belonging to trustees or private persons. So that the voluntary schools out-number the provided schools by about two to one. Owing to the fact that the provided schools are bigger than the others, and stand mainly in the towns, the relative number of children in the two classes of schools does not correspond to the number of the buildings. In the provided schools in round numbers there are 2,812,000 children, in the non-provided schools 2,900,000 children, or very nearly half and half. Now at length, after many years in which it was otherwise, there is a slight majority of children in the provided schools. It is out of the dual system of ownership, and indirectly from differences of religious character, that our present difficulties arise.

Various attempts have been made to solve these difficulties in a manner which would be fair to the existing interests—interests of parents, teachers, trustees, subscribers, and the ratepayers at large—and which would also be broadly acceptable to the whole people. Those endeavours have so far proved unsuccessful. A fresh attempt is now before the House of Commons on the initiative of the Government. I am bound to say that, as far as I can judge, all the evidence goes to show that these proposals as they stand are even less acceptable to the public than the previous endeavours that have been made. Objections are coming in from the local authorities, from the teachers, from trustees and managers of existing schools, and from educational experts of every kind. However excellent the intention, it does not appear that there is any very keen anxiety in any weighty quarter to pass that Bill into law as it now stands.

In the pause, before its consideration by the House of Commons, a proposal emanating—shall I say?—from the *perfervidum ingenium* of the Celt, rather than from the slower brain of the Saxon, is laid on the Table for our consideration. If the public Press be a fair criterion of general opinion of a *prima facie* sort upon this proposal, what is now suggested to us seems to be regarded favourably by controversialists who are ordinarily wide apart. A proposal which virtually, with whatever safeguarding phrases, brings into one camp *The Times* and the *Daily News*, the *Morning Post* and the *British Weekly*, the *Yorkshire Post* and the *Manchester Guardian*—I could easily enlarge the list—cannot altogether be contemptuously regarded either in this House or elsewhere. The proposals in this Bill are large, simple, far-reaching for a rearrangement—I prefer that word to the term bargain — whereby all schools, broadly speaking, shall become provided schools, and all schools shall offer freedom of religious choice both to the parents of the children and to the teachers in the schools. Disencumbered of all detail, the Bill comes to that. If that idea meets with such favour as has been apparently shown to it outside, I personally find it impossible in my keen anxiety for a settlement of this question, to regard it with an unfriendly eye, although the regard must needs be somewhat critical.

I speak throughout for myself alone. Some of those whom I most respect, whose counsel I am most desirous ordinarily of acting by, differ from me on the subject; and it is only, I believe, courteous consideration for myself or for my office which has in some quarters restrained a more vehement expression of that opinion. I recognise that courtesy and desire to call attention to it now lest it should be supposed that I claim to be carrying with me the opinion of all those with whom I should ordinarily act in such matters. I should be glad if those who differ from me would say their say on the subject; and I will myself be perfectly frank and straightforward with the House and those outside. Every serious, thoughtful, observant man must surely be wishful for a settlement now — not from a mere sense of weariness of this controversy—though that is a real factor in our common life and thought—but on public grounds of the deepest and largest kind in behalf of education itself. The present uncertainty tells upon local authorities, upon managers, upon subscribers to our schools and their fabrics, and very markedly upon the teachers. In all these ways the present uncertainty is distinctly hampering and hindering educational advance both in town and country schools.

Then I plead for a settlement on behalf of the strength and the dignity of our municipal and local life. People ought to be elected to our positions of trust in town and country because they are the best men rather than on partisan lines, whether political or denominational; and at this moment I know for certain of good men who would readily serve in these public capacities, but will not face the strife and controversy which is at present necessarily involved in such candidature. Public interests are therefore suffering in a very marked degree by the continuance of this controversy. But, above all, do I desire to a settlement for the sake of our moral and religious work. There never was a time in the history of our country when in social, economic, religious, and moral questions it was more necessary that men who really care, men who are actuated by high motives, men who are inspired by genuine zeal, should work together for what is pure and strong and true. We have to face dishonesty of different kinds—greed of gain, dark forms of impurity, and many other evils—rife in the land to-day. We want, in these matters, to stand side by side with those above all whose main interest lies in the moral and religious side of our common life, and it is simply heartbreaking that so many should be sundered because of this one question which keeps them apart. For all these reasons I am predisposed to look with favour upon any suggestion of this kind.

But besides all that, there is a gaunt spectre in the background—namely, the pushing of religious teaching outside our elementary schools altogether. Such a course would be—everybody admits it—right against the wish of the mass of the English people, whatever their denomination or their political connection. If it comes about at all, it will come about by mere force of circumstances, arising from the fact of its having been found practically impossible for people to come to an agreement on a difficulty which cannot be perpetually, continuously, and indefinitely allowed to stand across the path of our educational life. Is that a mere spectre, the creation of a nervous imagination? I try sometimes to think so, and I wish I could find it was. Of the introduction of a definitely secular system as an overt act on the part of any responsible Government or responsible body of leading men, I imagine we need have no fear. No one would categorically propose, or, if they did, have the slightest chance of carrying, a proposition of that kind. But arrangements might very easily be made for the sake of peace. in default of agreement, which would force us into such a system indirectly, and we might find ourselves subjected to it against what would practically be everybody's wish. One of the very gravest disasters would then have occurred which, in my judgment, could at present befall our land. I am predisposed, therefore, to look with a friendly eye on any even tolerable proposal which might bring us peace without the sacrifice of fundamental principle.

I think, my Lords, we sometimes forget that as practical men striving for a really workable solution we have perforce to consider in this matter not only what we think reasonable, but what what other people from their point of view think reasonable. In a letter which I read only this morning I find these words from a shrewd and far-seeing thinker—

> "We should be a little nearer a settlement if those who take part in the controversy could bring themselves to see that it is of no use to go on preaching the reasonableness of our own solution and the unreasonableness of every other. The thing that it concerns us to know is not whether people think wisely or unwisely, but whether they think resolutely—not whether they can defend their formula by sound argument, but whether they are determined to stand by it."

That may not be a very heroic sentiment, but I think it is a true one in endeavouring to find the practical solution of a matter of this kind. We must try, so far as is consistent with honesty and self-respect, to meet the wishes and demands which find strong expression on the part of thinking men whether we agree with them or not.

What demands does this proposal try to meet? First, as the Bishop of St. Asaph has reminded us, it tries to meet the demand for complete public control. All schools, speaking generally, are to become provided schools. I am personally by no means ready to admit that our voluntary schools now, inspected by the Government, by the local authority, overhauled at every turn, are not for all reasonable and practical purposes, under a complete system of public control; but on the very principle which I have just laid down, I am obliged to admit that a great many people do not think so; and we ought to try, in every way short of the abandonment of principle, to meet the genuine sentiments to which they give expression, whether we think those sentiments reasonable or not.

Personally, I believe in the exercise of public control in quite other ways than by a centralised bureaucracy. I look forward to a far wider re-establishment before very long of real local managers who shall be managers in fact as well as in name, who shall be completely popularly elected and shall have real power to manage, under proper supervision and appeal, the schools of which they are managers. I believe that by that means we shall securely enlist what at present we are in danger of forfeiting, the local interest of our best men. I am quite certain there is grave peril in the opposite state of things. Some local education authorities are acting wisely by deputing large powers to local managers. Others from economic or other reasons are weekly or monthly diminishing the responsibilities which belong to local managers, and by that means are quietly, I am afraid, tending to impair, if not to kill, that local interest which is vital to the real success of our schools throughout the land. Anyhow, this Bill gives in explicit terms complete public control, and admits the principle.

Then the Bill admits the principle of the freedom of the teacher as such from religious tests. That is the most difficult question, I think, of all the many difficult questions which arise in connection with our educational problem. I have myself all my life supported the principle of freedom from tests of all those who occupy public offices in the Civil Service or in other similar public capacity. I think that is accepted now by most people, and I confess I have come to admit it myself even for teachers in their professional capacity. But we must beware of making that principle, I had almost said, ridiculous, by saying that while we bid or encourage men or women as part of their daily work to teach religion, we absolutely decline to let anybody find out whether or not they have by training, experience, or knowledge, any fitness for the task. That seems to me to be a quite unreasonable following out in a fanciful direction of the large and sound principle of the freedom of the responsible public man from tests of a religious, and especially of a denominational, kind.

As I read this Bill, the proposals sketched to us provide first for keeping the suitable teacher, if he so wishes, as the main agent in all branches of education, including what we distinctively call religious teaching. That is, to my mind, intensely valuable. No one else can adequately take the place of that teacher, if he be a fit person, in giving religious teaching. To sever the secular teacher from the religious teacher, if such severance can be avoided, seems to me to be harmful in the extreme. The Bill also provides for distinguishing, so to speak, between the teacher, whose freedom from tests is as such guaranteed, and the teacher of religious knowledge. Only when a teacher offers himself either for the teaching of Holy Scripture or for the development of that teaching in a definitely denominational direction would he be a person who would give religious teaching. Thus the teacher would approach one part of his work simply as a professional teacher having a complete guarantee against any inquiry of a religious or denominational kind, other than those which refer to his moral character and the like, and he would approach the other part as a further duty which he is qualified or anxious to perform, but which he would not be called upon to undertake unless he offered himself for the purpose. By not so offering himself he would not be in any way prejudiced professionally in the life which he otherwise wants to lead as a teacher. In the new plan, then, which thus draws a distinction, it ought surely to be possible for somebody, under a system of complete popular control, to find out whether the person who volunteers to give this teaching at the direction and at the cost of the local authority is or is not a fit person for the task. The proposal of the Bishop of St. Asaph, then, seems to satisfy two great demands—the demand for popular control and the demand for the freedom of the teacher as such from religious tests.

On the other side—I speak of the other side without forgetting that the controversialists many times overlap in their opinions—we admit in this plan the principle of the parents' right of choice. That is, in our view, a fundamental principle which ought to underlie the whole treatment of this controversy. It is, of course, quite easy to overpress that assertion of the parents' right. To expect that every parent always will have found for him exactly what he desires is out of the question. The demand must be consistent with due management of the school, but within those proper limits it seems to me that it is impossible to assert too broadly or emphatically the parents' right as the governing principle of our action at the present time. We hear it sometimes said that the theory of the parents' right is a growth springing from the modern sacerdotal school. I have been looking back to find when it began. As far back as 1865 the doctrine was asserted by one who came forward as a witness on behalf of the Liberal Government before a Parliamentary Committee then sitting under Sir John Pakington. Lord Granville, at the time Lord President of the Council, was asked—

> "Would your Lordships hold that it is the parent alone who ought to have supreme authority over the religious teaching given to his children?"

The answer given was—

> "I should."

Coming down later, I find the recognition of that principle continuous, down to the controversies of the last year or two. In 1903, at the national council of the Evangelical Free Churches, held at Brighton, the president in his inaugural address, said—

> "We hold that it is the right of parents, not of trust deeds or of parish priests, to determine the character of the religious teaching given to their children; and, if this Bill (of 1902) had given the parents the power to assert that right and the opportunity to secure their wishes, there would have been an end to the bitterness of this controversy."

So it is impossible to say that this assertion is one put forward on behalf of the Church alone and that it has not a wider basis of authority behind it. In the municipal election in Liverpool last November, where controversy ran high, the Liberal Party put forward a circular containing the following—

> "Who are in favour of religious teaching in schools in accordance with the wishes of the parents?—The Liberal Party."

The Church of England has throughout contended for this principle of parents' rights as one that is sound and ought to be maintained. Elaborate evidence to that effect before the Committee of 1865–6 was given by the Rev. J. P. Norris, who had been one of Her Majesty's inspector of schools. Similarly in 1895 a memorial signed by the two Archbishops on behalf of the Church was presented to the Government. Among the various principles which the memorial laid down it asserted—

> "The right of parents to determine the character of the religious instruction provided for their children."

and

> "The safeguarding of this right as regards the religious teaching both of the children of Church parents in Board schools and of the children of Nonconformist parents in Church schools."

I want to destroy, if I can, the theory that this principle is something which is now put forward purely for controversial purposes, and to remind your Lordships of the prominent place which it has always occupied. If that principle is to be asserted, enforcement must be given to it in all our schools, not in one class alone. It is largely because in all our schools this Bill would enforce that point that I am prepared to look upon its proposals with favour.

The Lord Archbishop of Canterbury.

The Bishop of St. Asaph has alluded to the question of the teachers' religious liberty. I think his argument is unanswerable. The teacher's religious liberty is the due complement of the other theory of the teacher's freedom from tests. There must be liberty both ways. As it has been put, we decline to take off the fetters merely to put on the muzzle. We who know teachers in intimate daily intercourse and in our schools, whether council or voluntary, know how careful we ought to be to safeguard their liberty of conscience, and we know the keenness many of them feel about giving religious teaching. The old theory that all teachers are competent to give that teaching if it be teaching of a simple kind has been entirely upset by the changes which have recently come about in the system of training colleges. People say we ought to be perfectly satisfied that the average teacher can give religious instruction, because we have seen the system work well for a great many years. But the conditions have changed. Formerly almost all the teachers were people who had been trained under direct religious auspices, though not always denominational. Now a vast number of teachers are every year going forth into our schools who have never from the time they were themselves little boys and girls had any official teaching in religious matters or any training which would qualify them for that most difficult of all tasks—the giving of religious teaching adequately. The Day colleges are secular colleges almost entirely, and as long as that remains true the danger we speak of is a very real one indeed. The number of teachers who rightly would rather not give such teaching is undoubtedly large. The number who have had no training whatever for the purpose is undoubtedly large. I should desire that such men and women should be excused from giving religious teaching, not by having to come forward and claim to be excused, but should be excused merely because they did not come forward and volunteer to give religious teaching. That seems to me to be fairer to the teacher and much safer in its results in the schools. Those are what I may call the merits of the proposal before us.

Let us look at the other side. What does the Bill leave out? Most obviously it leaves out the fact that there are some schools in England which cannot possibly come within such a provision as this. There are Roman Catholic schools, Jewish schools, some of the Anglican schools, especially practising schools attached to denominational training colleges, and there are Wesleyan schools, to the best of my belief, to be considered. I do not wish to draw the line as to what number of Anglican schools would have to be included in this list, but there are a large number of schools which stand in an exceptional position for which some provision must necessarily be made. That provision must be made, whether it be by the somewhat awkward expedient of contracting out, or in some other way. That is absolutely essential to any settlement that is to be a fair one all round for the voluntary schools of England as they are. There is nothing against that in the Bill; it simply leaves the question out. Undoubtedly it would have to be made perfectly clear what could be done. The question is a very difficult one. It needs thorough consideration, and, of course, the suggestion I am making is wholly different from the method now proposed in the Government Bill, which would suggest, if the schools are to obtain any privileges, contracting out, not by the dozen, but by hundreds and thousands. That is a proposition which seems to me to be absolutely unworkable in practice. Without the insertion of some such provision as I have spoken of I do not think the proposal now before us could be made fair or practicable.

Then there should be some clearer definition than I can now gather from the Bill of what is meant by the transfer of our buildings. I believe Churchmen at large would entirely agree with the opinion that the asset of our ownership of the buildings must be retained. Ultimate possession must remain ours even where the transfer for school hours and for working purposes to the local education authority is complete.

But far the most important of the difficulties that the Bill suggests is that it by one sweep calls upon the men and women all over the land who have striven and taxed themselves in time, in money, and in toil for the maintaining of our voluntary schools as they are—it bids them hand those schools over to become provided schools.

The less important side of that question is the money side; but that point must be looked into. I find the very strangest ignorance among those from whom I should certainly not expect it on the money aspect of what our sacrifice has been with regard to our voluntary schools. A short time ago I was talking to a leading Member of Parliament, a supporter of the Government, for whom I entertain the highest respect, both as to his knowledge of many subjects, as to his character, and as to his enthusiasm upon moral and religious questions, and I asked him what he had found to be the main actuating influence which had led him to vote for some of the provisions in the Bill which came to grief two years ago. He answered—

> "I was largely led to it by the knowledge of the falling off in voluntary subscriptions as showing a diminution of the interest which people take in voluntary schools. Had they maintained them as they did in 1870, the whole position would have been very much different."

I asked him—

> "Were your votes actuated by that?"

and he said—

> "Certainly they were."

I said—

> "Would you be surprised if I told you that during these thirty years the subscriptions have not only not fallen off, but have grown steadily, and are more than double what they were when the Act of 1870 was passed?"

Here are the facts. In 1870 the voluntary contributions, for maintenance only, throughout England amounted to £418,000 a year, and of that sum the schools connected specially with the Church of England contributed £329,000. In 1880 the figure had grown to £739,000, and in 1901 the total amounted to £844,000, of which the Church subscribed £648,000. Therefore the Church of England alone was subscribing in 1901 £648,000 per annum as contrasted with £329,000 which we had been subscribing when the Education Act first came into force.

I do not put the monetary contributions as the main point, but it is necessary to put them forward as evidence how deep and growing has been the interest shown in this cause. Of course, I am perfectly aware that a good deal of that money was not given for strictly religious reasons. Much was given in the earlier years at any rate, in order to avoid the creation of school boards with their attendant rates. But if any one thinks that that explains the large amounts subscribed, let him look at the case of boroughs where there were school boards, and where people were already rated, and he will find that the contrast between the earlier subscriptions and the later ones is, in many cases, even more marked there than in the country places. Or take it in another way. Since 1902 everybody has been rated. Subscriptions are no longer wanted for maintenance, but they are wanted for buildings. We have no means of knowing exactly how much money has been given during that time for building purposes, as it does not necessarily appear in any statistical return, but during these three years I can say, from personal investigation, that more than £1,500,000 have been subscribed by people all of whom were already rated, in order to improve the buildings of their voluntary schools.

The Lord Archbishop of Canterbury

Why was all that money given? After deducting the money given for keeping out school boards, we can say that it was given to secure real religious teaching in our schools by competent people. I sometimes wonder what those who oppose us and deride our efforts really think does go on in the religious hour in our voluntary schools. Simple Bible teaching is sometimes contrasted with the teaching usually given in Church schools. Why, my Lords, the term "Simple Bible teaching," correctly describes the chief teaching in our schools if it be given by Christian men and women whose fitness we have ascertained as far as we can ascertain it, and who, with all the help that a living Church can give, are trying to make that teaching for the Church's own children a reality for worship and for life. Therefore, to draw a distinction between "simple Bible teaching" and "Church of England teaching" under the idea that something wholly different is being done in our schools is to misunderstand the position.

This proposal would allow both sorts of teaching in all schools; but it is urged by many that it is unfair that the one should be paid for out of the rates and that the other should not. I entirely agree; it is altogether unfair. But many things are unfair, and sometimes the best test of a man's earnestness is the fact that he is willing to suffer unfairness rather than abandon his principle. There is the question of money, and there is the far more important question of principle which lies behind. As to money, it seems to me palpably unfair in a country of religious freedom that some men should be called upon to pay twice over for the religious instruction which is being given to their children; that they should first have to pay a rate like other people, and that then they should have to pay extra for the religious part of the teaching to be given by teachers for whom they themselves would have responsibility. That is an unfair thing, but I do not say for that reason it is fatal to the acceptance of this principle.

But the question, not of money, but of principle is far reaching indeed. I have tried to show that such a plan as this would inflict hardship upon us in many ways. It would hand over during school hours not the use of our buildings only, but all control as to the appointment of teachers, and all security for what is somewhat vaguely called the atmosphere of the school. We should be paying for religious teaching more than twice over in places where our buildings were our own, and this would be true of two-thirds of the schools of England. That is an immense sacrifice to ask of us on the whole. I am still, my Lords, prepared to advocate our making it if, and only if, by so doing we can, on reasonable lines, settle this difficulty and secure a firm basis for the future. But to do that we must definitely secure freedom of parental choice in all schools and freedom to the teacher to volunteer for denominational teaching in all schools. Without that, in addition to some provision for exceptional schools, the fabric of the arrangement would at once fall to pieces in our hands. And when I say I am prepared to give some support to the plan, I mean to the plan in its entirely; not the plan with one-half of it taken away.

I picture myself having to go to the man in the country town or large village who has with infinite care during the last few years raised the money necessary for building a denominational school. He tells me, "If this new plan becomes law, I have lost everything. I might just as well have kept my money in my pocket; other people who have been living here have not paid a farthing towards it and they will have quite as much advantage in the end as we who have paid the money. Is that fair or reasonable?" My answer is, "It is most unfair, most unreasonable, as regards the personal result upon yourself and your friends. But what has happened is this. By the sacrifices which you and they have made you have secured the assertion of that principle of the parents' right of a denominational kind in all the schools of the land. There is where the difference comes in. You have not gained all that you hoped for in your school, and you have certainly gained nothing for yourself, but you have gained it for the children of England; and that is something which has been worth making sacrifices for.

Of course, to any solution such as this an infinite number of practical objections could be taken. I have no doubt Lord Stanley of Alderley would be able, from his vast accumulated knowledge of the practical management of schools, to show us how entirely unworkable it is. Any and every scheme which the wit of man can devise for settling this question can be shown to bristle with difficulties whichever way we look at it. But we exist to overcome these difficulties; and in my opinion the difficulties can be overcome if we put our backs to it and strive for a settlement.

I come to the last point. I know I tread on very dangerous ground, but I am going to be perfectly frank with the House and with those who may read our words outside. We shall be told, I think, that by the preferential treatment allowed to undenominational teaching—the paying for it, that is, out of the rates when the denominational teaching has to be voluntarily paid for by people already rated—we are establishing and endowing a new form of religion, to which, for want of a truer nomenclature, the critics have given the name of "Cowper-Templeism" — a system anomalous, irregular, and fraught with great peril because of the inevitable uncertainty as to the form it may take in particular cases. Theoretically I am not prepared to dispute that proposition, and, if the statement was as true in concrete fact as it is in abstract theory, it might be fatal to any such plan of settlement as is here suggested.

But we are bound, in fairness, to bear two things in mind. First, that some such preferential treatment has been in use, however unfairly, ever since 1870, and therefore in assenting to it we are not writing upon a clean slate, or devising a new plan of our own. We have next to remember that it is only by a strained use of terms that we can speak of that sort of teaching as a particular form of religion, or, in other words, an "ism." Conceivably it might be made so, but, with a pretty full experience upon this subject ever since my Ordination thirty-four years ago, I cannot honestly say that I think it has been so made. Most of the teachers who have imparted it are themselves members of some religious denomination, and I have not heard in my intercourse with them that they have found it inconsistent with their thoughtful loyalty to their own Church, whatever it be, to be giving this kind of Scriptural teaching upon a large Christian basis.

Will you pardon me if I explain by an example what I mean? It would be wholly out of place to enter here upon theological questions, but I do not know how to make my meaning clear except by an instance. If you will turn to the series of religious syllabuses now in use in council schools, you will find that in many of the more careful of them there is a long series of New Testament passages which are to be taught to the children. Take three of the passages generally included in the syllabus: The story of the manger cradle at Bethlehem; the parable of the Prodigal Son; and the story in outline of St. Paul's conversion and subsequent life. Christian teachers of all denominations are teaching these. Now, as a Christian, you cannot teach the story of the manger cradle even in the simplest form without teaching the coming of our Lord to this world. You cannot, as a Christian, teach our Lord's parable of the Prodigal Son without teaching, again in simplest form, what is meant by God's forgiveness of sin. You cannot as a Christian teach the story of St. Paul's conversion and subsequent life and work without its turning upon the fact of the resurrection of our Lord. Of course, the character of all such teaching depends upon the teacher. Hence the supreme importance of the Christian training colleges of the land—hence, too, the need of securing that no compulsion is put upon any teacher; he only gives such teaching, be it "simple Bible teaching" or anything else, if he desires to do so, and offers himself as possessing the requisite knowledge. Our teachers are a high class of men and women—as every one who knows them will admit; and in the main I am certain that—if once we have secured to them adequate opportunity of training—we may largely trust them, and they will prove responsive to, and worthy of, that trust.

The Lord Archbishop of Canterbury.

You will not suppose me to be myself ceasing to assert that children, especially as they grow older, are entitled to claim a more definite form of Christian teaching. Of course they are. Hence our building so many schools. Hence our struggle, even when paying for other schools also, to maintain ours. Hence the value we attach to that best of all summaries of the Christian faith—the Church Catechism. Such teaching is dearer to us than life itself. By this plan now outlined to us you would secure that, where the parent wishes it, and where the thing can be so arranged, there shall be opportunity everywhere for such definite teaching. It is the recognition of that parental right all round which in large measure commends this scheme to me. Not as a fair one—not as one which will not press hardly upon ourselves, not as one which gives us all that we might quite reasonably ask—but as one which may give us a roadway towards the bourne of settlement which we so desire.

I believe that when you regard the matter as a whole,—and leave necessarily out of account some of the stoutest and worthiest champions who uncompromisingly fight for what they believe to be right in this matter, but who, perhaps, a little fail to see the difficulties which beset the olution which they would desire—the great main body of this Christian people is more at one upon this anxious question than commonly appears. Which of us has taken part in great religious gatherings of all sorts and conditions of men—say at the time of the passing of the great Queen, seven years ago, when, all the land over, men who are ordinarily sundered offered prayer and praise together, or in the solemn consecration of our King, or on the recurring occasions of the funerals of our greatest men—which of us has borne part in these without feeling the pulsation of a larger Christian life, of a fundamental Christian unity? Which of us but feels at such an hour that down in the deeps of life the things which unite us in our faith are larger and stronger than the things which sunder us? If we can let such thoughts bear fruit in the attitude and temper of mind with which we approach the education controversy, its settlement—my Lords, it is my anxious wish and prayer—on lines of large tolerance and of real liberty may be near at hand.

*THE LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (The Earl of CREWE): My Lords, it may be for the convenience of the House if I now intervene in order to state, as I hope I may be able to with at any rate a fair degree of brevity, what the view of His Majesty's Government is with regard to this Bill. I may perhaps begin by saying that at first sight there seems to be some analogy between the position of His Majesty's Government in regard to this measure and their position with regard to two measures relating to Scotland which came up at an earlier period of the session, when my noble and learned friend on the Woolsack and myself had to state on behalf of the Government that we were not able to take any part in the discussion. But I think a little consideration will show that the resemblance, so far as it exists between the two cases, is purely superficial. In the first place, the Bill of His Majesty's Government relating to Scottish land was, so to speak, knocking at the doors of your Lordships' House, whereas it will yet be some little time before the Government measure on education arrives here.

But there is another and a larger difference. The fact is that this education question is in a very special and peculiar position. It is, if I may say so, more entirely and completely public property than any other question which can be said to be before the country at this time. There is no consideration concerning it that has not been brought before Parliament and no point that has not been argued and re-argued both here and in the Press. And consequently I think that even my right hon. friend who presides over the Education Department cannot claim, so to speak, exclusive patent rights even as regards the measure of which he has charge in the other House of Parliament. A short time ago a friend of mine reminded me that anybody who had to do with an education Bill could not act more wisely than in following the example of a lady celebrated in a poem of some 200 years ago, who

> "In matters of conscience adhered to two rules—
> To advise with no bigots, and jest with no fools";

and he might have added—what he did not add—that attention to that precept would relieve anybody from studying, at any rate, the whole of the correspondence which appears in the public Press on this question of education.

That means that this question ought to be approached with gravity and with moderation. The office of the right rev. Prelate who is responsible for this Bill made it, of course, certain that the first condition would be fulfilled, though it might not be an absolute guarantee that the second would be fulfilled also. But, as a matter of fact, I think your Lordships will all agree that it is in a spirit of very real moderation that the right rev. Prelate has approached this question. I recognise also a similar spirit of moderation in the eloquent speech of the most rev. Primate to which we have just listened, even running through his full and most closely reasoned apologia for the system of Church of England schools in this country.

His Majesty's Government recognise in this Bill an honest attempt to come to a settlement of this question, and we recognise it all the more fully because we are aware that it is not the first time that the right rev. Prelate has made a similar attempt. He alluded to his action in introducing the Transferred Schools Bill in 1904. That Bill bore some resemblance to the present measure, although it is, of course, by no means identical. It was of a much more permissive and tentative character than the present measure. I do not think any of your Lordships could have listened without respect, and even without emotion, to what the most rev. Primate said of his belief that this controversy ought somehow to be settled and of his conviction that means could be found of settling it. I heartily join with him in the expression of that wish, and I do believe that there is an increasing desire in the country for a settlement. I believe that the desire to arrange this question has reached a somewhat different stratum of opinion from that which was affected by it even so recently as when our Bill of two years ago was being brought in. And that is not because there is any conviction that the differences between the different parties on this subject are trivial in themselves, or that they can be lightly treated or ignored, but there is, I think, a growing conviction that it is a discredit to our national reputation for common sense that this controversy should be so long kept open—a discredit, if you will, to His Majesty's Government, but a discredit, also, to His Majesty's Opposition; a discredit, if you will, to the Church, but a discredit, also, to Nonconformity. If there is one aptitude on which we pride ourselves as a nation, it is that of being able to come to working agreements on difficult subjects, and I feel that the country is getting positively ashamed of the time that is being taken to settle this question.

There is, also, a further point, alluded to by the most rev. Primate, and it is this. If every path we take, as we hope, towards a settlement, is found to end in a thicket or a morass, people will begin to turn towards the wide and apparently straight path which leads to the secular system. That system, as we know, is attractive to many from its symmetry. It seems to content those who believe that under it they can give religious education to the children belonging to their own particular sect or section in the Church, but in the opinion of, as I believe, the majority of the people of this country it risks gravely compromising the religious life of the nation as a whole. The conclusion which I have reached from these things, after hearing the two speeches which have just been delivered, if I may venture to give advice to your Lordships, is that you would do wisely to read this Bill a second time. It is difficult to see that any injury can be done to the interests either of education or of religion by doing so, whereas the curt rejection of the Bill might, in my opinion, make a solution of the question more difficult.

But, my Lords, I should not be candid, and I should not be following the example which the most rev. Primate has given us, if I were to pretend that, in my opinion, all is plain sailing, or anything approaching plain sailing, for this Bill. There are very serious difficulties to be faced before this Bill could be regarded as a solution of the question. In the first place, both the previous speakers have drawn attention to the fact that no provision is made in the Bill for exceptional cases, such as those of the Roman Catholics and the Jews, and the right rev. Prelate regarded some provision of the kind as an indispensable part of the Bill. If he did, I am not quite clear why he did not make some attempt to meet it.

I do not know what the attitude of the Roman Catholic Church may be as regards passive resistance, but, if the Bill were to be passed into law as it stands, the adoption of passive resistance by every Roman Catholic, from the noble Duke opposite (the Duke of Norfolk) down to the poorest Irish labourer who carries a hod up a ladder would, I think, be explained, even if it were not justified. I see—and this is an important matter to bear in mind in this connection—no way by which this omission can be rectified in this Bill. I do not think that, without contravening the privileges of another place, it would be possible to insert, as an Amendment of this Bill, any provision which would meet the case of the Roman Catholics and the Jews. That is one difficulty which affects the Bill, although it need not be regarded as a difficulty of substance in a settlement of the whole question.

But the Bill proposes, as your Lordships will have gathered from the speeches that have been made, to alter the law in two very important particulars, dealing, in fact, with what, I think, were the two most interesting and important points of controversy between the two sides of the House when the Bill of my right hon. friend Mr. Birrell was before us. The first is the question of permitting all the teachers to give religious instruction. Perhaps I may be allowed to say, in passing, how deeply impressed I was with the description which the most rev. Primate gave of what is known as Cowper-Temple teaching, so valuable, as I think, because it described that teaching, not as it might be according to some *à priori* theory, but as it has actually been found to be in the practice of our schools. But this question of the teacher giving the denominational teaching is, as we all remember, as I, indeed, sorrowfully remember, one of the most controversial and difficult with which we had to deal. We always felt, and I never concealed my opinion, that in one sense it was a hardship on the teacher not to be allowed to give this particular teaching if he or she were willing to do so. But what will be said in particular, of course, as regards the single school areas, is that by allowing the teachers who are prepared to do so to give the denominational teaching you will be, as a matter of fact and reality, leaving a large number of those village schools, to all intents and purposes, precisely the same schools as they are at this moment, and that you will fail to meet what is the admitted grievance of Nonconformist parents and their children in those particular districts. You will also be told, I have no doubt, in the words used, I remember, on a former occasion by the noble Duke whose loss we all so deeply deplore—the Duke of Devonshire—that the difficulty consists in the fact that, if you make it an object to have a teacher of a particular religious belief to give denominational teaching, the teacher will be appointed either in order to give the teaching or in order not to give it. That is a practical difficulty of management which you will have to face.

The second important alteration is in regard to what is known as all-round facilities. All-round facilities have had a very real attraction, I think, for everybody who has attempted to find a solution of this question. I do not hesitate to say, speaking for the Government, that they were our first love and, though we have exhibited considerable infidelity to them at different times since, still we have never lost a certain affection for them. But I think it will be admitted that the question is one of extreme difficulty by those who recollect the debate which began in your Lordships' House on 31st October, 1906. In that debate, Lord Balfour of Burleigh moved an Amendment which proposed to incorporate in the Bill a system of general facilities; it was not quite so complete a system as that advocated in another Amendment by Lord Ampthill. I well remember that debate. The noble Marquess who leads the Opposition spoke in general terms in favour of the plan. Then two speeches were made, and I recollect those speeches very well, because they were an instance of what one does not very often see in the course of a discussion in any deliberative Assembly. As a general rule speeches are made on one side or the other, arguments are made and answered, and there is no visible effect on the opinion of anybody. But, on this particular occasion, two speeches were made, one by the Duke of Devonshire, and the other by Viscount St. Aldwyn, and one could, so to speak, see these speeches fermenting in the minds of noble Lords, with the result, as I believe, that whereas the great body of the House came down here with a very distinct predilection in favour of general facilities, then a kind of blight fell on every one, and it was generally agreed that it was not possible to support the Amendment. I remember that discussion, and I cannot help calling attention to it, lest it should be supposed that it is, after all, an easy matter to bring about this, in many ways, most attractive change.

One argument that will be used again is the exceedingly important one that it is a very difficult matter indeed, assuming that there is any considerable number of local authorities who definitely object to the giving of those facilities in council schools, to force upon them the necessity for doing so. There is no conceivable legal machinery by which that can be satisfactorily done; and it is well, therefore, if anything is to come of this, to demand distinct evidence, which may be forthcoming—I do not say it will not—of something like a general agreement all over the country, on the part of the public generally, and the local authorities in particular, that this is the proper solution at which we should aim. There were other difficulties, into which I need not go, expressed so eloquently and so fully by the most rev. Primate—difficulties from the Church point of view, which we must fairly balance against those from the Nonconformist, and purely civic point of view. The two sets of objections must be carefully balanced one against another, if we are to arrive at anything like a compromise.

My right hon. friend the President of the Board of Education has a Bill of his own in another place. That Bill differs in some important particulars from this, but it has this general resemblance to it—and so far the right rev. Prelate's Bill may, I think, be said to be founded on it—that it does aim at the establishment of a genuine national system. A universal national system is by general consent an impossibility; but both Bills aim at the abolition of a dual system, and the establishment of a single system. In our opinion it is my right hon. friend's Bill which ought to form the ultimate basis of full discussion on this subject in your Lordships' House. In the first place, it is usual and convenient that the discussion of an important subject like this should be taken on a Government Bill. In the second place, I do not think it is possible, consistently with the practice of Parliament, to engraft on this measure a clause dealing with the exceptional schools for which provision is to be made. Therefore, if your Lordships are willing, as I hope you will be, to give this Bill a Second Reading, its further discussion should be postponed at any rate for some considerable time. Of course, I entirely admit what fell from the most rev. Primate. This must not be regarded as the definite proposal or offer of the Church of England as a whole. We shall get no such offer; and, therefore, we must take what we can get in the way of expressions of opinion. We regard this Bill as being the expression of the opinion of a very large and, as we believe, of an increasing body of Church people upon the general lines on which this question ought to be settled. Feeling this, recognising this, we regard the production of this Bill as being a distinct assistance to my right hon. friend in laying his proposals before Parliament and the country.

*The Marquess of LANSDOWNE: My Lords, before this discussion proceeds further, it may, perhaps, be convenient that I should tell the House how some of us think that the Motion before us should be dealt with. I propose, before I resume my seat, to move an Amendment, the effect of which will be that this debate, instead of proceeding further, should be adjourned, and the few words which I have now to say will be devoted to an attempt to show your Lordships that there is a sufficient reason for the course which I advocate.

We find ourselves, particularly after the speech to which we have just listened, in a somewhat singular and unexpected position. His Majesty's Government have an Education Bill of their own. That Bill is one of such importance that they always assigned to it, if not the very foremost place, at any rate nearly the foremost place, in their legislative programme. We have been always under the impression that they had formed an inexorable resolve to pass that Bill, and it is interesting to observe that as lately as Friday last a colleague of the noble Earl's, Mr. Harcourt, announced that the Education Bill represented "the last word on denominational compromise." It is really remarkable that this last word should prove to be the penultimate, or even perhaps the ante-penultimate word of His Majesty's Government, and that the real last word should be spoken in your Lordships' House and of all places in the world, from the Episcopal Bench.

One sometimes endeavours, before a discussion of this kind, to form an idea of the kind of speech to which one is likely to have to reply; and I had formed a very distinct idea of the kind of speech which the Lord President was likely to deliver, and to which I should have to reply. It was not the same speech as that to which we have listened; and, indeed, in the noble Earl's opening observations I think I detected a certain feeling on his part that the House had a right to expect that his speech should be of a rather different kind. Like his, my mind went back to the occasion when we were discussing the Small Holdings Bill of Lord Camperdown. At that time there were two Small Holdings Bills before Parliament, one of them before the House of Commons and the other before your Lordships' House; I cannot resist reminding the noble Earl of some observations which fell from him on that occasion. He complained that my noble friend, in persevering with his Bill, was showing a certain want of courtesy to the Minister in charge of the rival measure, and he went on—

> "If this kind of thing is going to take place, the world will be not only a school for saints but a school for martyrs. I regard with some alarm the prospect of similar tactics being pursued with regard to the Education Bill, or Education Bills.
>
> "I can conceive at least seven different Education Bills, which might be brought in from different quarters of the House, at least three from the Episcopal Bench, and four or five from other quarters."

And now, my Lords, listen to what follows—

> "If it became the practice that independent Members were to bring in Bills of their own in order to anticipate Government measures, all I can say is that the prospect is one which fills me personally with something very like horror."

We detected no trace of horror in the composed remarks which the noble Earl delivered just now. On the contrary, what the noble Earl has told us, is that he, like, I believe, nearly all your Lordships, is earnestly desirous of seeing a settlement of this educational controversy, that he regards some of the proposals contained in the right rev. Prelate's Bill as of a valuable and suggestive character; and I understood him to add that His Majesty's Government were, at any rate, prepared to consider the propriety of grafting some of them upon their own Bill. I am, I own, a little doubtful as to the result of this process of grafting. I remember a conjuring trick which used to give great amusement in former days. The conjurer produced first a black rabbit and then a white rabbit; he kneaded the two together in his hat, and eventually produced a piebald rabbit. I fear that in this case the result of the process of amalgamation may be that we shall have a measure of ambiguous colour and of doubtful parentage. I am anxious that your Lordships' House should not be put in the position of confederates, distracting the attention of the public from the real issue while these ingenious proceedings are in progress. I hope that your Lordships will bear this in mind—that if you pass the Second Reading of this Bill, its provisions will be taken as representing your last word upon this subject. It will not be your irreducible minimum, it will be your unincreasable maximum. If this House should be placed in that position, I cannot help thinking that the champions of our voluntary schools will have had a very grievous set-back. If I say this, I earnestly trust your Lordships will not think that I am cynical or otherwise than grateful both to the right rev. Prelate who introduced the measure and to the Lord Archbishop for the part they have taken in the discussion. I feel as strongly as they do the need of a settlement of this endless educational controversy. I feel as strongly as they do that, while it continues to rage, the cause of education is suffering. I feel, above all, the immense responsibility which will rest on the shoulders of those who for party or other reasons obstruct a reasonable settlement of the difficulty if it should prove to be within our reach.

But I must say a few words as to the principal features of this Bill. I certainly regard them as a long step in the direction of the kind of compromise which I should like to see arrived at, and amongst them are concessions to which the right rev. Prelates cannot have consented without a certain feeling of reluctance, and a knowledge that they were exposing themselves to criticism, if not to odium, on the part of those with whom they usually act.

The Bill, in the first place, stipulates that religious instruction is to be given in all primary schools. If that principle be accepted we establish at once an invaluable bulwark against the peril of secularism which it has been truly said to-night lies in the offing, and to which we shall be brought nearer if those who desire that religious instruction should prevail are not able to come to terms among themselves. In the next place, I find in the Bill a frank admission of the parents' right to supplement non-distinctive religious education by religious instruction of a distinctive kind, even in the council schools. If that concession were to be secured it would, indeed, be a long step in advance. In the third place, I find in the Bill an admission of the teacher's right to give religious instruction if he desires to give it himself and the parents of the children desire him to do so. Let me remind your Lordships that these are three points around which the fiercest battle raged when the education question was before us in 1906, and if those three points upon which we then insisted can be settled as we desire they should be settled, we should, indeed, find ourselves much nearer to agreement.

But, while I readily make these admissions, I feel, as the most rev. Primate has told us he feels, that many points of the Bill stop far short of the kind of settlement upon which most of us on this side of the House would look with favour. There are, in the first place, several ambiguities in the Bill on which I will not dwell except to say that upon one point—a point of the greatest importance, namely, the conditions under which the trustees of the denominational schools are to be allowed to transfer the school buildings—I do not find in the Bill all that the right rev. Prelate in his admirable speech led us to suppose we might expect to find in it. That, no doubt, will be afterwards explained. But there are not only ambiguities in the Bill; there are omissions in it of a most serious description. In the first place, can any of us expect that the Bill in its present shape should receive any degree of support either from the Roman Catholics, or from the Jews, or from the owners of those Church schools which we used to speak of as homogeneous in character and as having a distinctive denominational atmosphere. The right rev. Prelate, I think, gave us to understand that in that respect the Bill was capable of amendment; but the matter is surely far too serious to be left out of account when we are dealing with the question of giving the Bill a Second Reading.

Then we are left in the dark as to what really is intended when, in the second clause, reference is made to the admission of religious teaching of a non-distinctive character in all the elementary schools. We have often been told in weighty words from the bench opposite that non-distinctive teaching, simple Christian teaching, may mean a great deal or that it may mean nothing at all; and I for one should be very sorry to see a Bill pass without some very much more specific information as to what is really meant by non-distinctive religious teaching. If we are, so to speak, to standardise the religious instruction given universally in these schools, we have a right to know at what point it is to be standardised, and, above all, what precautions you are going to take in order to prevent the standard which may receive the acceptance of Parliament to-day from being afterwards debased, and debased by administrative action of the kind with which we have become painfully familiar during the last few months.

There is another point with regard to which the Bill is silent—I mean the steps it is intended to take in order to ascertain whether the teachers are really competent to give even the simple Bible teaching which they are intended to provide. The right rev. Prelate apparently has some plan for achieving this object without imposing a test; but this point again is of far too great importance to be left unprovided for by specific provisions in the Bill.

But irrespectively of these considerations, I must point out that the noble Earl did not give us to understand that this measure was to be accepted, or that it stood any chance of being accepted, by His Majesty's Government as a substitute for their own Bill. Some parts of it may, he gave us to understand, be grafted on to the Government Bill, but we do not know how much. I suggest to your Lordships that this being so we have a right to ask that the whole of the Government scheme should be placed before us rather than that we should consent to the Second Reading of a measure which is obviously, and by the admissions of Ministers themselves, something very different from the kind of Bill they hope themselves to pass into law. The noble Earl was very frank with us. He told us that it did not seem to him that this process of amalgamation was by any means plain sailing. I am afraid not. In regard perhaps to the most important of all the proposals contained in the right rev. Prelate's Bill—I mean the proposal that facilities should be given in the council schools—he gave us to understand that he and his colleagues had at one time been enamoured of the idea, but that at a subsequent time they had been guilty of infidelity to it, and at this moment I do not know that I gathered from him that he had any distinct views one way or the other on the subject. If that is the attitude of the Government with regard to what I conceive to be the cardinal feature in the right rev. Prelate's proposal, I say that we have no right to commit ourselves to an approval of a Bill when so much of it still remains in a state of doubt and suspense.

Nor do I at all believe that by reading this Bill a second time to-night on the understanding indicated we should bring ourselves one inch nearer to the kind of concordat of which many of us are in favour. I believe, on the contrary, that the effect of taking a vote upon the Second Reading of the Bill would only be to accentuate the differences which we know to exist on many cardinal points. If His Majesty's Government really desire to appropriate some of the provisions of the right rev. Prelate's Bill and to add them to their own, they can perfectly well do so without asking us to take the Second Reading to-night. They can consider the matter at their leisure, and at the proper time bring before us a complete Bill embodying their own proposals, with the addition of so much of the right rev. Prelate's proposals as they desire to accept. In the meanwhile this debate will not have been without its use. It will, at any rate, have made this clear, that we shall all be glad to see this controversy set at rest, and that we recognise that, if it is to be set at rest, it can be set at rest only by a compromise, and that a compromise means that each side must surrender something of that to which it is most attached. Having established that, I earnestly hope that the right rev. Prelate will be content with the debate that has taken place, and that he will not insist upon taking the sense of the House or upon placing us in a position of difficulty with regard to a situation which is certainly a very singular one, and which has to a great extent resulted from the somewhat unexpected attitude assumed by His Majesty's Government. I move the adjournment of the debate.

Amendment moved—

"That the debate be adjourned."—(*The Marquess of Lansdowne.*)

*THE LORD PRIVY SEAL (The Marquess of RIPON): My Lords, I do not rise for the purpose of objecting in the least degree to the adjournment of the debate, though I regret that my noble friend will not have another opportunity of speaking at a later period of the discussion. He is an exhausted volcano, and I greatly regret that he will not have another opportunity of farther expressing his opinion upon this matter. I listened with sorrow to the general tone of the noble Marquess's speech. It seemed to me, I confess, to jar unpleasantly with the tone of the three other speeches to which we have listened to-night. The excuse, I suppose, is to be found in this, that my noble friend did not know, as he frankly told us, what was going to be said by my noble friend behind me, and that he was, therefore, quite unprepared as to the part he should take in this matter. The speech of the noble Marquess, indeed, was a mere party speech, and only towards the latter portion of it did he give us any hope that he would look upon this matter in the spirit in which it has been approached by the right rev. Prelate who introduced the Bill, by the most rev. Primate, and by my noble friend behind me the Lord President of the Council. In my judgment, this is to be regretted. There does seem to be a general desire to come to a compromise or understanding upon this question, and I cannot say that I think that most important object was in the slightest degree advanced by the tone which my noble friend adopted. No doubt this Bill cannot be accepted as it stands. There is one part of it to which I could not for a moment think of being a party, and that is that it makes no provision—I do not exactly know why no provision was included—for Roman Catholics and Jews. I recognise the earnest desire to arrive at a settlement by compromise, but we shall never arrive at such a settlement unless we are prepared to approach it in a spirit considerably different from that of the noble Marquess.

THE LORD BISHOP OF BIRMINGHAM: My Lords, I am going to have the audacity to ask your Lordships to listen to a few words from me upon this Bill. I——

THE MARQUESS OF RIPON: The Motion is that the debate be adjourned.

THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: The right rev. Prelate can speak on that Motion.

THE MARQUESS OF RIPON: He can speak only on the Motion for adjournment.

THE LORD BISHOP OF BIRMINGHAM: I do not know whether I can use this opportunity to say a few words which I believe should be said from this bench, partly because I do not think it desirable in the public interest that it should go forth that this Bill has at all a kind of agreed consent from this bench, and partly because there is one particular point which seems to me to have been very little, if at all, touched upon in this discussion. Though I listened, for my own part with profound satisfaction, to the speech of the noble Marquess the Leader of the Opposition, I did not, even in his speech, catch exactly the attention to this point which I think it demands. Those of us who cannot find in this Bill the prospect of a reasonable settlement are those who value most the privilege of giving distinctive religious teaching to the children of those parents who desire such teaching through teachers who believe in it. At present our stronghold for fulfilling this all-important function is the position of the denominational schools, and I do not think we would be justified as trustees of a great public duty in surrendering that stronghold for the prospect of additional facilities in all schools. The reason why I think this is because I do not believe that the parents of any very large number of children would ask for special facilities where any kind of religious teaching was already given as the normal and established kind. I read this afternoon in the *Manchester Guardian* this inducement to persons to vote for this Bill, that—

> "If these facilities were allowed, it is highly probable that they would be very little used."

Why? I think the answer a fairly obvious one. If all parents were asked whether they wished religious teaching for their children I have no doubt that the great majority would express a desire for religious teaching; and, if asked what kind of religious teaching, they would with more or less eagerness indicate the religious teaching they desired. But, if there was already a religious teaching established and endowed as the ordinary religious teaching in the school, I believe comparatively few parents would ask, over and above that, for extra facilities for a special kind of religious teaching. Unwillingness to ask for anything extra pervades all classes in England. I believe the majority of the parents of the upper classes would not be willing to send their children to a school where there was no religious teaching, but I have been amazed to find how few parents, either of the upper or of the lower classes, appear to care what particular character that religious teaching takes. Therefore, I think if there was religious teaching provided in all schools——

*THE EARL OF CREWE: I am extremely sorry to interrupt, but I would remind the right rev. Prelate that it is irregular at this stage to speak to any question but that of the adjournment. On the adjourned debate he will be able to speak as long as he likes on the merits of the Bill. The House has to confine itself now to the question of the adjournment.

THE LORD BISHOP OF ST. ASAPH: My Lords, I desire to say that I willingly accept the Amendment to adjourn the debate.

The Earl of ROSEBERY: May I say one word strictly pertinent to the Motion for adjournment? I think all of us must feel, after the brave and noble speech we listened to this evening from the most rev. Primate, that there is some hope of a settlement of this controversy, due partly to the many fruitless attempts made to settle it, and also due to some extent to the shame which is creeping over the people of this country at our failure to settle it. Then we come to the question of what is to be done with this Bill. Surely it represents an enormous step forward. I can quite understand the caution with which the noble Marquess treated it lest it should be considered as the last word that he was willing to agree to in behalf of his Party in connection with this question. But it would be a thousand pities if this Bill were read a second time to-night, because after what has fallen from the Front Opposition Bench it is perfectly clear that the Opposition as a whole would not feel that they could vote for it at this stage of the controversy. Whereas, if the debate is adjourned by the proposition of the noble Marquess, the Bill will not die, but will lie dormant, and it is quite possible as this controversy advances, and as things may occur in another place, that it might be well to revive the dormant Bill, which, in any case, must remain on the journals and records of this House as a document of the highest educational importance.

The Duke of NORFOLK: I understand that, the Adjournment being moved, any further discussion on the Bill at this stage would be irregular?

The Earl of CREWE: That is so.

The Duke of NORFOLK: That relieves me of the necessity of inflicting a speech upon your Lordships. I congratulate you.

On Question, Amendment agreed to, and the further debate adjourned accordingly, *sine die.*

THE PERSIAN FRONTIER.

Lord NEWTON: My Lords, on behalf of my noble friend Lord Lamington I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether His Majesty's Government consider British interests in the country between Baghdad and the Persian frontier are properly safeguarded, and whether anything has recently occurred calculated in the future to prejudice the development of our already predominant interests of trade and commerce in those regions.

*The UNDER-SECRETARY of STATE for FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Lord Fitzmaurice): My Lords, the Question which my noble friend has placed on the Paper is one on which I confess I have had some little difficulty in placing an exact meaning. I do not quite understand what is aimed at in the Question, and to what it is that I am exactly expected to reply. I am asked, in the first place, whether His Majesty's Government consider that British interests in the country between Baghdad and the Persian frontier are properly safeguarded. I do not want to appear in any way discourteous to Lord Lamington or to my noble friend who has put this Question on his behalf if I follow the terms of the Question closely, and ask them to accept my assurance, on behalf of the Foreign Office, that in our opinion British interests in that country are properly safeguarded, and that nothing has occurred, especially in the short interval which has taken place since the debate on the Anglo-Russian Convention, to make it necessary for me to add anything to the statement I made on that occasion.

I then pointed out, if I may accept the geographical description in the Question as relating generally to what may be called the frontier of Turkish and Persian possessions in those parts, that there was at that time—and, to a certain extent, there still is—a condition of great unrest, which caused anxiety to His Majesty's Government, owing to the deliberate renewal, by the action of the Turkish authorities themselves, of that dangerous and ancient dispute in the neighbourhood of the Lake of Urumiah and Suj Bulak, to which my noble friend Lord Reay called attention in this House in 1906, and upon which I then made a statement. Most of your Lordships who follow these questions are aware, from telegrams from the seat of these troubles published from time to time in the newspapers, that there have been armed collisions in that district, that Turkish troops crossed the frontier and seized districts, including at least one important town within and indeed beyond the long disputed territory. On the whole, I am now able to say that things are on a more satisfactory footing, that the Turkish troops have been withdrawn from certain positions, and that there is some reasonable prospect of the arbitrations and delimitations in those territories, upon which these questions depend for their solution, being allowed to proceed. But then, I am only surmising as to whether that is what the noble Lord who placed this Question on the Paper had in his mind.

In regard to any other possible aspect of questions in that part of the world, I can certainly say that no alterations have been made, for example, as to the number or position of British Consuls or representatives. The only change has been in the greater activity which British and Russian diplomatists have shown in bringing strong pressure to bear on the Turkish Government in order to induce them to limit the unfortunate activity of the Turkish troops on the frontier and to induce the Persian Government not to take greater offence than they would be fully justified in taking at the reckless conduct of the Turkish authorities, and to take the measures indicated by the old Boundary Treaty to push forward the proceedings by which alone these constant disputes can be determined.

As regards the second part of the Question—whether anything has recently occurred calculated in the future to prejudice the development of our already predominant interests of trade and commerce in those regions—I have been told that the noble Lord was anxious to obtain from me, on behalf of the Foreign Office, a contradiction of a report which I understand had reached him, and which I know has been circulated in some quarters, that there are secret Articles in the Anglo-Russian Convention about which Parliament has been told nothing and which contemplate some great changes in that part of the world. Questions in regard to secret Articles are always open to this fatal objection, that we may be told that if we say there are no secret Articles that is because a secret Article, by its very nature, is an Article which cannot be stated in public. It is, however, one thing to convey to Parliament and the public by a statement the contents of a secret Article, and it is another thing to allow or deny, according to circumstances, the existence of a secret Article. A Government might be able, though it would not be a pleasant position, perhaps, to be placed in, to admit of the existence of a secret Article and at the same time to say that, owing to reasons of high policy, its contents could not be communicated. I am not placed in that position at all to-night, because I am able to state, on behalf of the Foreign Office, and I know the House will accept the assurance, that there are no secret Articles in the Russian Convention, and that Parliament and the public are fully cognisant of the whole of the arrangements made between Russia and this country. I feel that I have only been able to make a rather vague and uncertain answer to the Question on the Paper, but that is because the Question lacks all specific character; and I rather anticipated that when my noble friend opposite, who has had such great experience of these matters, took charge of the Question he would have indicated what the points were upon which information was desired.

LORD NEWTON: I hope I may be permitted to clear my character by saying that I was asked to put the Question only because I was an available Peer.

LORD SANDERSON: In that circumstance the noble Lord might have done what I did, and declined to put it.

LORD NEWTON: I am evidently of a more obliging disposition than my noble friend.

THE EASTER RECESS.

*THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: Can the noble Earl the Lord President tell the House what is proposed with regard to the Easter Adjournment?

The Earl of CREWE: We propose that the House should adjourn on Thursday, 9th April, until Tuesday, 5th May.

HOUSE OF LORDS OFFICES.

First Report from the Select Committee considered (according to order), and agreed to.

House adjourned at twenty minutes past Seven o'clock, till To-morrow, a quarter past Four o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Monday, 30*th March*, 1908.

The House met at a quarter before Three of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 63 COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. Speaker laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order 63 has been complied with, viz. :—London United Tramways Bill.

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time.

PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS PREVIOUSLY INQUIRED INTO COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. Speaker laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto, have been complied with, viz. :—Briton Ferry Urban District Council Bill [Lords ; London County Council (Tramways and Improvements) Bill [Lords] ; Rhymney Railway Bill [Lords] ; Norwich Union Fire Insurance Society Bill [Lords] ; Interoceanic Railway of Mexico Bill [Lords] ; Commercial Union Assurance Company Bill [Lords].

Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time.

Bury and District Joint Water Board Bill ; Dublin and South Eastern Railway Bill ; Finchley Urban District Council Bill ; Seaham Harbour Dock Bill.—Read the third time and passed.

Bromley and Crays Gas Bill ; Glyncorrwg Urban District Council Bill ; Lincoln Corporation Bill.—As amended considered ; to be read the third time.

Huddersfield Water Bill [Lords].—Read a second time, and committed.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, " An Act to provide for the granting of superannuation allowances to the officers and servants of the councils of the metropolitan boroughs of Camberwell, Deptford, and Hackney ; and for other purposes." [Camberwell and other Metropolitan Borough Councils (Superannuation) Bill [Lords].

Camberwell and other Metropolitan Borough Councils (Superannuation) Bill [Lords].—Read the first time ; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

PETITIONS.

COAL MINES (EIGHT HOURS) (No. 2) BILL.

Petition from Oban, against ; to lie upon the Table.

DAIRIES (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Leith, in favour ; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSING BILL.

Petitions against : From Crewkerne ; New Windsor ; and, Westbury ; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSING BILL.

Petition from Beeston, for alteration to lie upon the Table.

LICENSING BILL.

Petitions in favour: From Balham; Bolton (two); Hollington; Hucknal Torkard; Liskeard (two); Nottingham; Outwell (two); Putney (two); Sparkill; Stockport; and Wolverton; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

NATIONAL SCHOOLS (IRELAND).

Return [Presented 26th March] to be printed. [No. 104.]

LOCAL TAXATION (IRELAND) RETURNS.

Copy presented, of Returns of Local Taxation in Ireland for the year 1906–1907 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

CIVIL SERVICES (SUPPLEMENTARY) ESTIMATE, 1908–9).

Estimate presented, of the Further Amount required in the year ending 31st March, 1909, for Diplomatic and Consular Buildings [by Command]; Referred to the Committee of Supply, and to be printed. [No. 105.]

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS (NAVY VOTES).

Copy presented, of Treasury Minutes dated 30th March, 1908, authorising the temporary application of Surpluses on certain Navy Votes for the year 1907–1908 to meet Excesses on other Navy Votes for the same year [pursuant to Resolution of the House of 4th March. 1879]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 106.]

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS (ARMY VOTES).

Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated 30th March, 1908, authorising the temporary application of Surpluses on certain Army Votes for the year 1907–1908 to defray Excesses on other Army Votes for the same year [pursuant to Resolution of the House of 4th March, 1879]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 107.]

IMPERIAL REVENUE (COLLECTION AND EXPENDITURE) (GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND).

Return ordered, "relating to Imperial Revenue (Collection and Expenditure) (Great Britain and Ireland) for the year ending the 31st day of March, 1908 (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper No. 242, of Session 1907)."—(*Mr. Joseph A. Pease.*)

REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE (ENGLAND, SCOTLAND, AND IRELAND).

Return ordered, "showing for the year ending the 31st day of March, 1908; (1) The amount contributed by England, Scotland, and Ireland, respectively, to the Revenue collected by Imperial Officers; (2) the Expenditure on English, Scottish, and Irish services met out of such Revenue; and (3) the balance of Revenue contributed by England, Scotland, and Ireland, respectively, which are available for Imperial Expenditure in continuation of Parliamentary Paper No. 245, of Session 1907)."—(*Mr. John O'Connor.*)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS. CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Auxiliary Engines on Battleships.

MR. WEDGWOOD (Newcastle-under-Lyme): To ask the Secretary of State to the Admiralty whether he can state the numbers and approximate horse-power of auxiliary engines or machines driven by steam, compressed air, hydraulic power, and electricity in a sample battleship of 1876, and in a similarly classed battleship of 1908.

(*Answered by Mr. Edmund Robertson.*) The total number of auxiliary engines on board one of our modern battleships reaches 364. Of these approximately 75 per cent. are under the charge of the gunnery and torpedo lieutenants. The total horse-power the whole number could utilise at full power is 15,100. In the case of H.M.S. "Alexandra," completed in 1877, the number was thirty-seven, and the total horse-power they could utilise, 1,720.

Overtime in Cork Post Office.

MR. AUGUSTINE ROCHE (Cork): To ask the Postmaster-General by whose authority postmen, otherwise than two privileged sorting postmen, are employed on overtime at the Cork Post Office in disposing of inward American correspondence, notwithstanding the Secretary's instructions to the contrary: and will he see that the practice be discontinued.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) Overtime is unfortunately necessary for disposing of the inward American correspondence at Cork, and both sorting clerks and telegraphists, and postmen are employed for the purpose. I am not aware of any instructions confirming such employment to particular postmen.

Cork Post Office and the American Mails.

MR. AUGUSTINE ROCHE: To ask the Postmaster-General what arrangements, if any, have been made in the Cork Post Office to surcharge insufficiently prepaid outward American correspondence; is he aware that on the 5th and 8th instant exceptionally heavy mails were despatched from the Cork office to the United States without any effort whatever being made to surcharge the same, hereby entailing a considerable loss of revenue to the United States, and, in view of the fact that the Cork Post Office is now the despatching office for United States correspondence from the South of Ireland, will he consider the advisability of creating extra appointments to deal satisfactorily with this work; will he say on whose authority postmen are employed on overtime in sorting outward American correspondence; and will he have the practice discontinued.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) Outward American correspondence is examined daily at Cork by a sorting clerk and telegraphist, and insufficiently prepaid items are surcharged by him. I am assured that sufficient staff is provided for the satisfactory performance of the duty. The employment of postmen in connection with the disposal of newspapers for America does not infringe any existing regulation.

Deaths due to Administration of Anæsthetics.

MR. BRAMSDON (Portsmouth): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if he will state how many deaths occurred during the year 1907 in the metropolitan area, and in the other part of England and Wales, respectively, from the effects of the administration of anæsthetics.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) The figures for the year 1907 are not yet available. According to the verdicts of coroners' juries and the certificates of medical practitioners there were, in the year 1906, 64 deaths in London and 119 in the remainder of England and Wales caused by anæsthetics administered for operations. There appears to be some reason to doubt whether the certificates on which these returns are based are in all cases complete, and there must necessarily sometimes be difficulty in determining if death under an anæsthetic is caused by the anæsthetic. I propose, therefore, to make further inquiry into the matter.

Dublin Auxiliary Postmen.

MR. NANNETTI (Dublin, College Green): To ask the Postmaster-General if the auxiliary postmen's class in Dublin is a permanent force, and if he will issue instructions that in case of vacancies on this class ex-telegraph messengers should receive the preference, provided their health and character is good; if he is aware that an ex-telegraph messenger named James Keenan, who was performing duty at the James's Street district office, Dublin, has been dismissed for no other reason than to make room for a man (apparently a friend of the inspector) who has no claim whatever to the position; that Keenan was capable of performing the duty satisfactorily, while the man who replaced him is unable to do so without assistance; and that the placing of an incapable man on the duty throws extra work and pressure on the other men; and if, in the interest of the service, he will cause Keenan to be reinstated.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) The auxiliary postmen in Dublin are not a permanent force in the sense that any member of it has a claim to permanent employment. I am considering whether it is advisable to employ ex-telegraph messengers as auxiliaries. The circumstances of Keenan's case are not accurately stated in the Question. The man who replaced Keenan had been longer employed and had a stronger claim than Keenan; and he is reported to be thoroughly competent to perform the duty. I regret that I am unable to reinstate Keenan.

Treatment of a Sorter in the East Central District.

MR. W. T. WILSON (Lancashire, Westhoughton): To ask the Postmaster-General if he is aware that a member of the East Central Branch Committee of the Fawcett Association has been called upon to answer vague and general charges concerning his official conduct, upon his annual increment becoming due, without having previously had such charges brought to his notice; and whether he will make inquiries into the case with a view to insure equitable treatment for trade union officials.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) The sorter to whom the Question appears to refer is not a satisfactory officer. When the time came for considering whether his next increment should be allowed he was, in accordance with the regular practice, informed in writing of his shortcomings and asked if he had any explanation to give. Since then it has been necessary to ask him for a further explanation of a serious irregularity in connection with registered letters. His membership of a branch committee of the Fawcett Association had no influence whatever on the treatment of the case.

Whale Fisheries (Ireland) Bill.

MR. HUGH LAW (Donegal, W.): To ask the Vice-President of the Department of Agriculture (Ireland), when he proposes to introduce his Bill to regulate the carrying on of a whale fishery on the Irish coasts.

(*Answered by Mr. T. W. Russell.*) I am in consultation with my right hon. friend the Chief Secretary in regard to this Bill, and hope to be able shortly to make an announcement concerning it.

Wages of Packers in the Ordnance Store Department, Woolwich.

MR. CROOKS (Woolwich): To ask the Secretary of State for War if he can state the result of the long inquiries which have taken place with respect to the wages paid to the workmen who are classed as packers by the Ordnance Store Department, Woolwich Arsenal, as these men were promised an increase of wages to start from 1st January, 1907.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The rate of wages now paid to packers is that of labourer, 23s. a week, with an additional pay of 2d. to 4d. a day, according to skill. This rate has been approved with effect from 1st April, 1907.

Annual Cost of a Battleship.

MR. HAROLD COX (Preston): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether, on the assumption now made by the German Government that the life of a battleship is only twenty years, he can, without taking responsibility for this assumption, state what is the annual cost of a first-class battleship in full commission, taking interest at 3 per cent., and allowing for interest, depreciation of capital, wages of officers and crew, and a proportionate charge for pensions, repairs, and renewals, and other necessary items; and whether he can give corresponding information with regard to the annual cost of a first-class torpedo boat and a first-class destroyer respectively, assuming the life of each of these vessels to be ten years.

(*Answered by Mr. Edmund Robertson.*) The annual cost in full commission of the under-mentioned classes of vessel taking interest at 3 per cent. and allowing for interest, depreciation of capital, wages of officers and crew, and a proportionate charge for pensions, repairs, and renewals, and other necessary items, and also assuming a life of twenty years in the case of the battleships and ten years in the case of the torpedo-boat destroyers and first-class torpedo boats respectively, is as follows—

	£
First-class battleship - -	231,500
Torpedo-boat destroyer - -	17,500
First-class torpedo boat -	6,100

Cooking Staff at Chatham Naval Hospital.

MR. JENKINS (Chatham): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he is aware that at the Chatham Naval Hospital there are at present only one cook and an assistant engaged in serving the 320 patients and nine officers, which results in badly-cooked food being served to the patients, thus retarding their recovery; and whether he will take steps to have a more adequate staff provided.

(*Answered by Mr. Edmund Robertson.*) The staff actually employed, which consists of one cook and two assistant cooks, is considered adequate, and compares favourably with those at Haslar and Plymouth. I cannot find that there is any justification for the suggestion contained in the hon. Member's Question.

Teachers and Religious Instruction.

COLONEL WARDE (Kent, Medway): To ask the President of the Board of Education whether, under the terms of the proposed Education Bill if a non-provided school is transferred to the local authority and religious instruction is demanded in accordance with the London County Council syllabus, it will be competent for teachers to claim that, inasmuch as there are to be no tests for teachers, they cannot be compelled to give the necessary instruction.

(*Answered by Mr. McKenna.*) Yes, Sir. Under Clause 1, Sub-Clause (1), of the Bill, no teacher may be required, as a condition of his employment to give any religious instruction.

Purchase of the Doongeelagh Estate, County Sligo.

MR. O'DOWD (Sligo, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in June last, the Estates Commissioners received a memorial from the tenantry of the Doongeelagh Estate, partly owned by Mr. Robert Hamilton, of Tawnagh, Riverstown, County Sligo, and situate in Killadoon, Boyle No. 2, Electoral Division, praying them to communicate with the owners or their agent, Mr. Thomas A. Cox, Hermitage, Croghan Boyle, with a view to purchase; and whether they have taken any steps in the matter, and, if so, with what result.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The Estates Commissioners have received the memorial, and have asked the agent whether the owner is prepared to sell the property to them, but have not yet received a reply.

Compensation for Loss to Staff-Officers of Disbanded Volunteer Regiments.

MR. LAMBTON (Durham, S.E.): To ask the Secretary of State for War, whether anything will be done to compensate those adjutants of Militia and Volunteers who, owing to the Territorial Army Scheme, have been obliged to vacate their appointments before their time has expired, and have thus suffered in many cases serious pecuniary loss through being left with house property on their hands.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The Army Council is alive to the claims of adjutants whose position has been affected by recent changes of organisation, and will do what is practicable to save them from suffering loss.

The Duke of York's School—New Site.

MR. HART-DAVIES (Hackney, N.): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether the land on which the new Duke of York's School is being built at Dover was originally the property of Government; and whether the site selected was formerly occupied by the military prison.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The reply to both Questions is in the negative.

Vaccination Exemption—Case of Mr. Eastman.

MR. JACKSON (Greenwich): To ask the President of the Local Government Board whether his attention has been called to the fact that Mr. A. E. Rossiter, vaccination officer of the Greenwich Union, omitted to serve Form Q. on Mr. Frederick Daniel Eastman, of 45, Lausanne Road, Queen's Road, S.E., before Mr. Eastman's child had attained the age of four months, as prescribed by the Vaccination Order of May, 1907, and, whether, in view of the fact that this omission contributed to Mr. Eastman's neglect to make a declaration under the Act of 1907 until six days after the four months limit prescribed by that Act, and that Mr. Eastman has made a declaration and paid 1s. 6d. for it, although a week too late, he proposes to take any steps in the matter.

(*Answered by Mr. John Burns.*) I understand from the vaccination officer that he visited the home of the child on 12th February last, when the child was little more than three months old, that he was told by the mother that it was not intended to have the child vaccinated, and that he informed her that the necessary objection should be sent within the time allowed. I also understand that his note of the case after his visit shows that a notice in the Form Q. was sent in the evening of the day of his inquiries. It does not appear to me that I can take any steps in the matter, but I gather that the father has not communicated with the vaccination officer with regard to the case since the latter returned to him the statutory declaration which was made after the prescribed period, and it may be desirable for him to do so.

Postal Facilities at Curragunneen.

Mr. KENDAL O'BRIEN (Tipperary, Mid.): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he can see his way to establish a Sub-Post Office at Curragunneen, near Roscrea, County Tipperary, to meet the pressing requirements of the people of the district; whether he is aware that several of the inhabitants have to travel six, seven, and eight miles to post their letters in order to save a day in the delivery of them; and whether, having regard to the fact that if an evening collection of letters were established at Curragunneen there would be no loss whatever sustained by the Post Office, he will take steps to meet the wishes of the people of the district.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton*). There is already a Post Office at Curragunneen, but hitherto it has not been possible to provide an evening collection except by incurring expense which would not have been justified. I am glad to say, however, that the circumstances have changed, and, as the postman will be provided with a cycle, it will be possible for him to make a collection from that office at about 3.50 p.m.

Rejected Sites for Labourers' Cottages in the Clogheen Rural District.

Mr. CULLINAN (Tipperary, S.): To ask Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland if he will furnish a return of the number of the proposed sites for labourers' cottages which were rejected by the Local Government Board inspector, Mr. Hogan, in respect of a labourers' cottage scheme by the Clogheen Rural District Council, the local inquiry for which was held on 26th, 27th, 28th, and 29th November, 1907, at Clogheen, and the reason for such rejections.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The Local Government Board's inspector has already furnished the particulars in question to the rural district council.

Overloading of the Steamer "Baltic Exchange."

Mr. HAVELOCK WILSON (Middlesbrough): To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he has received any report with regard to the allegations made by the sailors and firemen on the steamer "Baltic Exchange," that this vessel was overladen on the voyage from Emsenade to Las Palmas and Las Palmas to England; and what action, if any, has been taken.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) Inquiries have been made into these allegations at Antwerp and at Cardiff, and they do not appear to be well founded.

Licences Terminated at Ashton-under-Lyne and Hurst.

Mr. SCOTT (Ashton-under-Lyne): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he can state how many licensed houses in the borough of Ashton-under-Lyne and district of Hurst have been closed under the Licensing Act of 1904; what amount was paid as compensation in respect of each house; and what proportion of the money went to the owner of the house and to the tenant respectively.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) All the information available in answer to the Question is given in the annual volumes of Licensing Statistics. I am unable to give figures for individual houses or for the urban district of Hurst apart from the petty sessional division in which it is included, but I have had the following figures extracted for the hon. Member's convenience:—

(*a*) Petty Sessional Division of Ashton-under-Lyne (which includes the Urban District of Hurst.)

Year.	Number of licenses.	Compensation paid.		
		To licensee.	To other parties.	Total.
		£	£	£
1905 - - - -	Nil.	—	—	—
1906 - - - -	Nil.	—	—	—
1907 - - - -	3	50	1,978	2,028

(*b*) Borough of Ashton-under-Lyne.

Year.	Number of licences.	Compensation paid.		
		To licensee.	To other parties.	Total.
		£	£	£
1905 - - - -	Nil.	—	—	—
1906 - - - -	1	70	1,030	1,100
1907 - - - -	3	135	3,960	4,095
Total - - -	4	205	4,990	5,195

Importation of Low-Class China Tea.

SIR SEYMOUR KING (Hull, Central): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether his attention has been called to the large amount of low-class China tea which has of late been consigned to this country; whether he is aware that a large portion of it is lying unsold in the bonded warehouses, the quality being so low that the trade refrain from purchasing it, even for blending purposes; and whether he will take steps, in the interest of the consumers, to prevent the importation of teas of such an undesirable quality, which are quite undrinkable by themselves and only used for adulterating pure Indian and Ceylon teas.

(*Answered by Mr. Asquith.*) The Board of Customs have no official information as to the importation of low-class China tea, nor as to a large portion of such tea lying unsold in bonded warehouses. The powers of the Board with regard to the quality of imported tea are defined in Section 30 of The Sale of Food and Drugs Act, 1875. They are satisfied that the duties of inspection and analysis are properly carried out and that they are effective for the purpose. I may, however, point out that, under the powers referred to, tea cannot be excluded from consumption merely because it is of low character. It must be so bad as to be "unfit for human food" before it can be so dealt with by the Commissioners of

Customs. I understand that the increased demand for tea in various countries has caused prices to harden considerably, and that the enhanced value has attracted to this country importations of low-class tea for blending purposes to meet the demand for tea at a low price. Such tea, though of low quality, would nevertheless not be unfit for human consumption, and I do not think it would be in the interest of the poorer classes of the community to discourage the use of the cheaper kinds of tea.

Evicted Tenants—Reinstatement of John M'Kiernan.

MR. THOMAS F. SMYTH (Leitrim, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if the Estates Commissioners have received an application for reinstatement from John M'Kiernan, Drumshambo North, Aughavas, for the farm of land at Drumkillvy, Mohill, County Leitrim, on the estate of Mr. George White, from which his father was evicted some years ago; and, if so, what action is to be taken thereon.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The application in this case was only received on 25th February. The Estates Commissioners will deal with it in due course, regard being had to the priority of the numerous applications previously received.

Refusal to Reinstate Martin Brien, of Ballynulta.

MR. JAMES O'CONNOR (Wicklow, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can state upon what grounds the Estates Commissioners have refused to reinstate Martin Brien, Ballynulta, Shillelagh, in the farm on the Fitzwilliam Estate from from which his father had been evicted.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) Martin Brien is a younger son of the evicted tenant. His elder brother, Nicholas, has also applied to the Estates Commissioners for reintatement, and, in their opinion, he has a prior claim in the event of their being able to provide a holding. The evicted farm has been purchased by the occupying tenant, but the Commissioners will consider whether it may be possible to provide another holding for Nicholas Brien.

The Glenahiery Outrage.

MR. CHARLES CRAIG (Antrim, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary of the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if the document of 11th September, in reference to the Glenahiery outrage, or any draft of it, was read, either by, or in the presence of, the Inspector-General, the Under-Secretary, and the Law Officers, before it was signed by District-Inspector Preston.

(*Answered by Mr. Cherry.*) The Answer is in the affirmative.

Reinstatement of Mrs. C. Gleasure.

MR. WILLIAM ABRAHAM (Cork County, N.E.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state whether the Estates Commissioners have had under consideration the application of Mrs. Catherine Gleasure, an evicted tenant, for reinstatement in her former holding at Moneen, Glanworth, County Cork, on the estate of Miss Roberts; and if action is being taken to bring about her reinstatement, having regard to the fact that the present tenant does not live on the holding, but uses it solely as accommodation land and for foddering cattle.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The Estates Commissioners have decided that the applicant is a suitable person to hold land and they have referred her case to an inspector with the object of arranging for her reinstatement or of providing her with another holding if possible.

Cost of Royal Commission on Irish Congestion.

DR. AMBROSE (Mayo, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland what was the cost of the recent Royal Commission on Congestion.

(*Answered by Mr. Runciman.*) This Commission has not yet presented its Report, but up to date the expenditure incurred in the inquiry, including the estimated cost of stationery and printing, amounts to about £13,150.

Poor Relief in Ireland.

Dr. AMBROSE: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland what was the amount spent on relief of the poor in Ireland during each of the three years 1905–6, 1906–7, and 1907–8, dividing it into the amount spent on outdoor relief, the amount spent on indoor relief, the amount spent on indoor able-bodied pauperism, and the amount spent on outdoor able-bodied relief.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The appended table gives the expenditure under the heads specified therein for the financial years 1904–5, 1905–6, and 1906–7. The particulars for the current financial year cannot, of course, yet be given. The guardians' accounts do not distinguish the expenditure on able-bodied paupers—

	1904–5.	1905–6.	1906–7.
	£	£	£
In maintenance - - - -	455,511	460,016	457,721
Out-relief - - - - -	209,054	228,870	214,719
Expenses of district schools -	7,398	8,068	7,658
Maintenance of blind, deaf and dumb, and idiots in institutions, and cost of relief in extern hospitals - - -	20,431	19,719	20,888
Emigration - - - -	42	20	49
Salaries and rations of officers -	199,713	196,709	205,653
Cost of medicines and medical, &c., appliances in workhouses	11,825	10,190	10,811
Other expenses - - -	121,697	134,826	124,419
Total - - -	1,025,671	1,058,418	1,041,918

Division of the Estate of Sir K. Burrows at Bushfield, Queen's County.

Mr. DELANY (Queen's County, Ossory): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that Farrell's farm at Bushfield, Queen's County, estate of Sir Hildare Burrows has been sold to the Estates Commissioners for the past twelve months; and can he say when they propose dividing it amongst the local claimants.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The farm in question has not been sold to the Estates Commissioners, but the Commissioners have had it inspected and the owner has intimated his willingness to accept their estimated price for it. The farm, however, is included in an originating application which deals with the estate as a whole, and it is not proposed to complete the proceedings in the case of Farrell's farm separately from the remainder of the estate. The entire estate will be dealt with in its due order or priority.

Relief of Distress at Lurgan and Portadown.

Mr. DEVLIN (Belfast, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he could state what steps were being taken to alleviate the distress at present existing amongst the working classes in Lurgan and Portadown; whether the distress was due to any particular cause or was affecting any particular class of workers; and whether he would consider the advisability of communicating with the local authorities in these two towns with a view to the devising of some means other than soup kitchens supported out of private subscriptions for the alleviation of the distress.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) Voluntary measures are being taken by the local people to alleviate the distress which exists in the two towns referred to. The Local Government Board understand that the distress is caused by the great depression at present existing in the linen industries, and that it affects the operatives in those industries and in the allied trades. No representations have been made to the Board by the local people, who appear to be satisfied that the voluntary measures which are being taken to supplement the Poor Law are sufficient to cope with the distress.

Distress in Belfast.

MR. DEVLIN: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the statement made on the 20th instant in the Belfast Police Court, by Mr. Nagle, resident magistrate, to the effect that there had recently been great distress in the country, and that practically every day in that court they had cases of poor people, who were utterly destitute, and had no homes, brought up for wandering about the street at night, and that the funds in the police court poor box, from which many of these poor people received assistance, were hardly equal to the demand; whether he could state the approximate number of the unemployed in Belfast at present as compared with this time last year; and whether he would consider the advisability of communicating with the local authorities in Belfast with a view to the initiation of some means of alleviating the distress at present existing in that city.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) I have seen a newspaper report of Mr. Nagle's remarks to the effect stated in the Question. His object seems to have been to stimulate the flow of donations to the police court poor box. The Local Government Board have no information as to the approximate number of the unemployed in Belfast, but the relief statistics for the Belfast Union show that the average number of persons in receipt of outdoor relief during the past three months is 686, as compared with 530 last year. The Board have no reason to believe that the resources of the union will be inadequate to meet any distress which may arise, and, in all the circumstances, they do not feel that they have any grounds for making special representations on the subject to the local authorities.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Naval Battle Practice.

VISCOUNT CASTLEREAGH (Maidstone): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether certain ships fired trial shots prior to commencing the regular battle practice; and, if so, what are the names of those ships.

. THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON, Dundee): A few ships fired practice rounds on a separate range at a different target on the same day that they fired their battle practice. The names of the ships known to have done this are "Bulwark," "Leviathan," "Dido," "Magnificent," "Victorious," "Majestic," "Natal," "London," "Essex."

VISCOUNT CASTLEREAGH: Is it in accordance with the rules of practice that trial shots shall be fired by any ships?

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: This was a case of target practice.

Torpedo Boats Re-boilered.

MR. NIELD (Middlesex, Ealing): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he will state the numbers of the three effective old first-class torpedo boats which have been re-boilered with boilers of water-tube type in lieu of those of locomotive type with which they were originally fitted, and the numbers of the remainder of the boats which are to be re-boilered in a similar manner in the near future.

Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON: Not three, but all old torpedo boats have been re-boilered, excepting four, which will be taken in hand shortly.

Refitting of Protected Cruisers.

Mr. NIELD: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he will state the dates on which the refits to the protected cruisers "Andromeda," "Edgar," "Gibraltar," and "Hawke," referred to in the statement explanatory of the Navy Estimates 1906–7 as included in the list of the most important of the refits to be carried out in 1906–7, were actually taken in hand; and when the refits may be expected to be completed.

Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON: The following are the dates: "Andromeda," begun October, 1907, to be completed June, 1908; "Edgar," begun November, 1906, completed July, 1907; "Gibraltar," begun October, 1907, completed January, 1908; "Hawke," begun April, 1907, completed November, 1907.

Repairs of Armoured Cruisers.

Mr. NIELD: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether, having regard to the fact that the list of large repairs to be completed during the financial year 1906–7, referred to in the statement explanatory of the Navy Estimates 1907–8, included the armoured cruiser "Leviathan" and the protected cruiser "Ariadne," and also to the fact that their repairs were there stated to be practically complete, he will give the reason why, in the Admiralty explanatory Memorandum to the Estimates, these ships were declared to be still undergoing repairs.

Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON: The repairs were not actually finished on the 31st March, 1907, and some part of the work, therefore, fell upon the first few weeks of the following financial year, viz., the year 1907–8 as shown in the First Lord's Memorandum for 1908–9.

Rosyth.

Mr. FELL (Great Yarmouth): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty if he will stipulate in any contracts made for the construction of works at Rosyth that granite from the United Kingdom shall alone be used.

Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON; I have nothing to add to my statement on Navy Estimates on the 10th March.

Mr. FELL: I hardly remember what that was.

*Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Member can look it up.

Navy Contracts.

Mr. FELL: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty if the eleven firms recently invited to tender for the supply of the 75,000 silk scarves for use in the Navy comprised amongst them any foreign firms.

Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON: No, Sir.

Mr. FELL: Do I understand there are two principles prevailing at the Admiralty in regard to contracts—that in one class foreign material is allowed and not in another.

*Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order.

Haulbowline Works—Cost of Granite.

Mr. MITCHELL-THOMSON (Lanarkshire, N.W.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he has now obtained information from the contractors who are using foreign granite at Haulbowline as to the relative cost of British and foreign granite.

Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON: Admiralty contractors are not under any obligation to state the cost of the materials used by them. It is not the practice, nor would it be desirable, to press them to give any such information.

Mr. MITCHELL-THOMSON: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that this Question was put down in consequence of remarks which fell from him?

Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON: No. I was asked generally as to the difference between the prices, and not to obtaining the information from the contractors.

Mr. T. L. CORBETT (Down, N.): The right hon. Gentleman invited me to put down this very Question.

Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON: No, not this Question. The previous Question asked me to cross-examine the contractors, which I refused to do.

Mr. MOONEY (Newry): When the right hon. Gentleman is in communication with the contractors, will he endeavour to find out the names of the owners of the quarries from whom this foreign granite is obtained?

Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON: I do not propose to enter into communication with the contractors.

Mr. MITCHELL-THOMSON: Will the right hon. Gentleman consider the advisability of asking contractors to state when their tenders are put in whether or not they intend to employ foreign materials?

*Mr. SPEAKER: That is quite a different Question from the one on the Paper.

Cost of Battleships.

Mr. HAROLD COX (Preston): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether on the assumption now made by the German Government that the life of a battleship is only twenty years, he can, without taking responsibility for this assumption, state what is the annual cost of a first-class battleship in full commission, taking interest at 3 per cent., and allowing for interest, depreciation of capital, wages of officers and crew, and a proportionate charge for pensions, repairs, and renewals, and other necessary items; and whether he can give corresponding information with regard to the annual cost of a first-class torpedo boat and a first class destroyer respectively, assuming the life of each of these vessels to be ten years.

Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON: The annual cost in full commission of the under-mentioned classes of vessels, taking interest at 3 per cent. and allowing for interest, depreciation of capital, wages of officers and crew, and a proportionate charge for pensions, repairs and renewals, and other necessary items, and also assuming a life of twenty years in the case of the battleships and ten years in the case of the torpedo boat destroyers and first-class torpedo boats, respectively, is as follows:—First-class battleship, £231,500; torpedo boat destroyer, £17,500; first-class torpedo boat, £6,100.

Cost of the Territorial Force.

Mr. ASHLEY (Lancashire, Blackpool): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War what is the difference between the basis on which he has estimated the cost of the Territorial Force for 1908–9 to exceed by £443,000 that of the Yeomanry and Volunteers for 1907–8, and the basis on which he estimated in his Memorandum (Cd. 3296, of session 1907) that the annual cost of the proposed Territorial Force would be less by £1,541,802 than that of the auxiliary forces as then constituted.

The SECRETARY of STATE for WAR (Mr. Haldane, Haddington): As stated in my Memorandum on Army Estimates 1908–9 the sum of £443,000 is the excess of Vote 4 of 1908–9 over the combined total of Votes 4 and 5 of 1907–8. The sum of £1,541,802 is the excess of the total cost under all Votes in 1906–7 of the Militia, Yeomanry, and Volunteers, over the first approximate estimate of the cost under all Votes, of the Territorial Force as shown in Cd. 3296 of 1907. The hon. Member will see that the figures are in no way comparable. The money which was formerly spent on the Militia is now being spent on the Special Reserve. If this is borne in mind the figures given will be found readily intelligible.

Mr. ASHLEY asked whether the right hon. Gentleman had not estimated the cost of the Territorial Force at a million and a half less, while, as a matter of fact, it was half a million more.

Mr. HALDANE: That is founded on a misunderstanding of figures. When this question first came before the House of Commons the proposition was that the Militia should go with the Territorial Force, and we took the whole cost, therefore, of the Militia, Yeomanry, and Volunteers, and put the cost of the Territorial Force against it. When it was decided that the Militia should go to the Regular side, they went and took their cost with them. The only estimate I have ever given the House of Commons has been the estimate of the cost of the Territorial Force in the papers to which reference has been made. The first sum was £2,850,000, which afterwards, as the result of discussions in this House, was raised to £3,500,000. Beyond that no estimate has been given, and there has been no increase in the estimate of what I believed would be the cost.

Territorial Force—Separation Allowance for Lance-Corporals.

MR. ASHLEY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether separation allowance will be issued for the benefit of the wives and families of married lance-corporals of the Territorial Force during the annual training in camp and at authorised courses of instruction.

MR. HALDANE: Lance-corporals will be granted separation allowance.

Volunteer Quartermasters.

MR. REES (Montgomery Boroughs): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that many quartermasters in the Volunteer Force are men who have had distinguished service in the Regular Army, and have left the Army in order to take up the appointment of quartermaster, expecting to continue in the appointment till incapacitated by old age; whether the salaries of these officers will cease as from the 1st of April next; whether in this case they will receive any compensation in lieu of the notice that might reasonably have been given to them; and whether they will be expected to perform without pay the same duties in the Territorial Army as they have hitherto performed in the Volunteer Force.

MR. HALDANE: May I venture to point out to my hon. friend that any arrangement with Volunteer quartermasters has been between them and the corps, and that the Army Council has had nothing to do with it. I hope that the Associations will be able to retain their services, even though many of the duties hitherto performed by the quartermasters will now be performed by the Associations. If any payment for duty outside the period of annual training in camp is necessary, it will be met from the Associations' grants, but this is part of the internal economy of Associations with which we have no intention of interfering.

Optional Period of Training.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER (Croydon): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether it is proposed during the current year to curtail the period of fifteen days training in camp prescribed for the Territorial Army; if so, to what extent is the length of training to be reduced; and, if any reduction is contemplated, is it to be made with the object of increasing the military efficiency of the troops or of effecting a saving of money.

MR. HALDANE: Instructions have been issued that the Territorial Force is to be trained this year as laid down in the Act, but that arrangements are if possible to be made to let men have the option of training eight or fifteen days. If the right hon. Gentleman will read what I have stated repeatedly in this House and elsewhere in regard to the plans for training he will find that there is and can be no question of saving money.

VISCOUNT HELMSLEY (Yorkshire, N.R., Thirsk) asked whether the right hon. Gentleman did not say, when the Bill was going through the House, that the question of granting to individual men the option of training for eight or fifteen days would rest with the general officer.

MR. HALDANE: So it does. For this year the general officer commanding the district has been asked to give an option, as far as possible, so as to make the transition as easy as possible.

COLONEL LOCKWOOD (Essex, Epping): Does that include the Artillery?

MR. HALDANE: Yes.

VISCOUNT HELMSLEY asked whether they were to understand that individual members of the Territorial Force would be able to say they did not want to go out for fifteen days, but only for eight days, although the rest of the battalion might be doing the whole fifteen days.

MR. HALDANE: The training will take place this year very shortly after the conversion, and it is necessary to show some consideration for the difficulties of individuals. I am talking of a temporary arrangement for this year only, and not of a change in the general arrangements.

Mr. ASHLEY asked whether they were to understand that after this year all the Territorial Force would train for fifteen days, except under special circumstances.

Mr. HALDANE: Subject to the discretion of the general officer commanding.

Australia and Compulsory Military Training.

Mr. LONSDALE (Armagh, Mid.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether the details of the new Australian scheme of universal compulsory military training have been considered by the military advisers of the Government; and whether it is intended to offer to the Commonwealth Government imperial assistance in the development and training of the new organisation.

Mr. HALDANE: The military advisers of the Government have duly perused the scheme mentioned in the Question. The Commonwealth Government has not as yet invited any comment or assistance in regard to the scheme, but that Government is well aware that advice or assistance would gladly be given whenever asked for. As the hon. Member is aware, in accordance with the resolution passed at the Colonial Conference last year, the Commonwealth Government can avail themselves of the services of officers of the General Staff.

Volunteers and the Long-Service Medal.

Mr. J. W. H. THOMPSON (Somersetshire, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether the forthcoming regulations will provide that service in the Volunteer Force prior to enlistment in the Territorial Army will count towards qualification for the long-service medal.

Mr. HALDANE: The reply is in the affirmative. Service in the Volunteer Force will count towards the long-service medal.

War Office Supply of Cordite.

Viscount HELMSLEY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether all cordite containing mercuric chloride, supplied to the War Office, has been destroyed; and, if so, what was the total amount so destroyed, and what did it cost.

Mr. HALDANE: No cordite belonging to the War Department has been destroyed because it contained mercuric chloride.

Viscount HELMSLEY asked whether they were to understand that the Government had a supply of cordite containing mercuric chloride in their possession.

Mr. HALDANE: Yes, in these circumstances. We rejected all the cordite which was in course of delivery to us which was found to contain mercuric chloride, because it was not in accordance with the specification. But there was some that we had accepted and paid for. Having regard to the probability of its containing mercuric chloride, we set it aside, and we are now subjecting it to various tests of a searching kind, which mercuric chloride cannot mask. Mercuric chloride does not damage the cordite; it only masks the heat test. Otherwise it may be perfectly good. We are subjecting this specific cordite to a much more searching test, and on the result of that test will depend the question whether we should make any use of it or destroy it.

Viscount HELMSLEY asked whether it was not the case that in the specification it was particularly stated that the cordite was not to contain mercuric chloride.

Mr. HALDANE: It was not to contain any foreign ingredient, including mercuric chloride. We rejected all the cordite we could.

Lord BALCARRES (Lancashire, Chorley) was understood to ask why having already rejected some of this cordite the War Office in August accepted some thirty tons for use by the Army?

Mr. HALDANE: I must ask for notice of any Question as to facts. I am not sure the noble Lord is not under a misconception. What we have done, if we have done it at all—I rather think we have not—is to subject all cordite which was suspected of having mercuric chloride used in its composition to a different and a searching test.

MR. MITCHELL-THOMSON: How much cordite does the right hon. Gentleman place in the category of "suspected" cordite?

MR. HALDANE: I cannot tell the exact amount, but it is substantial—a very considerable amount.

MR. BELLAIRS (Lynn Regis): I should like to ask whether this new searching test is not——

*MR. SPEAKER: That does not arise out of the Question.

AN HON. MEMBER: Will the contractors who supplied the cordite which was subsequently found to contain mercuric chloride be called upon to refund?

MR. HALDANE: Litigation is now actually pending between the War Office and the contractors.

MR. BELLAIRS: May I ask if this new test will be applied to cordite stored at stations abroad?

*MR. SPEAKER. That does not arise out of the Question on the Paper.

Yeomanry and the Territorial Army.

VISCOUNT HELMSLEY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether Yeomen who have completed three years' service or their period of re-engagement, as the case may be, will not be permitted to join the corresponding branch of the Territorial Army unless they bind themselves to serve for four years.

MR. HALDANE: I would refer the noble Lord to the Answer I gave on this point to a similar Question put on the 26th inst. by the hon. Baronet who represents the Chippenham Division.

Scarborough Barracks.

MR. WALTER REA (Scarborough): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether the Burniston Road barracks at Scarborough which, since the removal of the Royal Garrison Artillery Depôt, have almost ceased to be occupied, are well above the average in suitability, owing not only to their modern construction and healthy situation but to the considerable amount of land adjoining which has been purchased and placed at their disposal by the Corporation of Scarborough; and whether, having regard to these facts and in view of the loss to the State involved in keeping the buildings empty, he will endeavour to devise a plan by which they may be utilised for some special or other purpose which will entail their regular occupation.

MR. HALDANE: Under present arrangements it has not been found practicable so far to quarter in Scarborough barracks more than a very small body of men. I am well aware of the advantages of the barracks, and I can assure my hon. friend that the first opportunity will be taken of utilising them, providing that such occupation is consistent with the general scheme of distribution, and the necessity for economy.

Supply of Army Horses.

MAJOR ANSTRUTHER-GRAY (St. Andrews Burghs): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he can now furnish any information as to the result of the conference between the War Office and the Board of Agriculture with regard to an efficient supply of horses for military purposes?

MR. HALDANE: I think I may go so far as to say that the result of the conference has been satisfactory, but I am not at present able to give the House any definite information in regard to the measures which, it is hoped, it may be found practicable to carry out.

MAJOR ANSTRUTHER-GRAY: When does the right hon. Gentleman expect to be able to make a statement on the subject?

MR. HALDANE: The two Departments are in conference on broad principles. I can only say now that communications are passing.

Motor Vehicles for Army Service.

MAJOR ANSTRUTHER-GRAY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether his notice has been directed to the reports of an automobile for military service constructed to carry wounded soldiers, ammunition, or stores, one of which is to be supplied to every infantry regiment in Austria; and whether he will consider the practical value of such an invention for the British Army, particularly with regard to machine guns, etc., accompanying cyclist battalions.

Mr. HALDANE: The use of motor vehicles for military purposes is receiving attention. Motor transport has been sanctioned for the cyclist battalions of the Territorial Force (in which alone they are included) for carrying machine guns, etc., but no definite pattern of vehicle has been finally decided on.

Old Fife Artillery Militia.

Major ANSTRUTHER-GRAY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether it is the intention to continue the training of the recruits of the Old Fife Artillery Militia at the county town; and where, under the new regulations, this corps will undergo its training.

Mr. HALDANE: Recruit training will be carried out with the training brigade Royal Field Artillery at Glasgow. Under the new regulations, the corps will undergo its training with the training brigade to which the unit is affiliated; the place is not yet settled.

Territorial Forces Medal.

Lord BALCARRES: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if, in the event of men joining the Territorial Army who have served in His Majesty's regular forces, such service, whether wholly or in part, may be reckoned towards service in the Territorial Force, and thereby count towards any medal or decoration?

Mr. HALDANE: Service in the Regular Forces will not reckon as qualifying for the Territorial Forces medal.

Army Council (Powers) Bill.

Mr. ASHLEY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War when he intends to introduce the Army Council (Powers) Bill?

Mr. HALDANE: Very shortly.

Opium in Ceylon.

Dr. RUTHERFORD (Middlesex, Brentford): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the Commission on Opium in Ceylon has reported yet; and, if so, when the Report will be in the hands of hon. Members of this House.

The UNDER-SECRETARY of STATE for the COLONIES (Mr. Churchill, Manchester, N.W.): The Commission has reported, and I hope soon to be able to lay the Report on the Table. I am awaiting the observations of the Governor upon it.

Ceylon Postal and Telegraph Rates.

Mr. REES: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he is aware that the postal and telegraph rates in Ceylon compare very unfavourably with those in force in the United Kingdom and India, though in the latter case the mileage is so much greater, the rates for parcels being nearly double the Indian rates; and whether he will make inquiries into this matter with a view to the provision of more favourable rates in Ceylon.

Mr. CHURCHILL: The rates in question do not appear to be unduly high and the Secretary of State is not aware that they have been the subject of complaint. The matter is primarily one for the Ceylon Government to decide, and the Secretary of State has not received any representations which would justify him in addressing the Governor on the subject.

Mr. REES was understood to ask if any action would be taken.

Mr. CHURCHILL said that no doubt the Question of the hon. Member would draw special attention to the matter, but he could not say if it would lead to any change in the rates.

Communication with Nyassaland.

Mr. REES: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he is aware that, owing to the insufficiency of steamer communication on the East Coast of Africa, three mails sometimes reach Zomba and Blantyre together after a failure for two consecutive weeks; and whether the Colonial Office will take into consideration the needs of Nyassaland in this behalf when the question of improving communications in this quarter arises.

MR. CHURCHILL: The needs of Nyassaland will certainly be taken into consideration when there is any opportunity of improving communications with the East Coast of Africa, but, as I said on Tuesday last in reply to a Question by my hon. friend the Member for the Chippenham Division, the negotiations with this object have not up to the present been successful. I have no information with regard to the cases of delay in the delivery of mails to which the hon. Members refers.

Chinese Labour Ordinance.

MR. LONSDALE: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the Government will lay upon the Table the correspondence which passed between the Secretary of State for the Colonies and the Transvaal Government with reference to the continuance of the Chinese Labour Ordinance up to the formal sanction given to the Ordinance in December last year.

MR. CHURCHILL: Yes, Sir.

The Nairobi Incident.

SIR GEORGE SCOTT ROBERTSON (Bradford, Central): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies if his attention has been drawn to the recent incident at Nairobi, where Lord Delamere and a Mr. Baillie seem to have compelled the Governor against his wish to receive them and others as a deputation on the local labour question, and to promise to receive a second deputation on the following day, but that before the second interview could take place the Governor suspended Lord Delamere and Mr. Baillie, and has petitioned His Majesty the King to remove them permanently from the Governor's Council; can he say whether he has any official information on the subject; and whether he proposes to take any action in the matter.

MR. CHURCHILL: The facts are substantially as stated by the hon. Member. The Secretary of State has expressed his approval of the Governor's action in suspending Lord Delamere and Mr. Baillie from the exercise of their functions as members of the Legislative Council. He proposes to await the receipt of the Governor's despatch on the matter before deciding whether any further action is necessary.

MR. ASHLEY: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies if he can make any statement with reference to the labour question in British East Africa and the recent meeting at Nairobi; and what white force is available in the Protectorate to maintain the authority of the Governor.

MR. CHURCHILL: Differences between the Governor and a section of the white settlers on the subject of the regulations for native labourers have led to a disorderly demonstration; but pending the arrival of the Governor's despatch the Secretary of State is not aware of the exact points at issue. There is a force of some twenty white policemen in Nairobi and the neighbourhood.

MR. ASHLEY: Is it true the Governor took the chair at one of these meetings?

MR. CHURCHILL: I understand he met a deputation and discussed the question at issue with it. They came in a body to the Governor's house.

MR. ASHLEY: The suggestion is that the Governor took the chair at a public meeting to discuss this very question.

MR. CHURCHILL'S reply was inaudible.

SIR GILBERT PARKER (Gravesend): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether Lord Delamere and Mr. Baillie have been removed from the Legislative Council of British East Africa; and, if so, on what grounds this action was taken; and whether Papers will be laid.

MR. CHURCHILL: The persons whom the hon. Member names have been suspended from the exercise of their functions as members of the Legislative Council because the Governor reports that they took part in an organised demonstration of an insulting and disorderly character against His Majesty's Representative in the Protectorate. The Secretary of State is awaiting a despatch. Papers will be laid in due course.

Trade at Gibraltar.

SIR GILBERT PARKER: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies, in view of the depression of trade in Gibraltar, due to the reduction of the garrison and the handing over of the commercial mole to the Admiralty, whether the Government is satisfied that the increase in the General Sanitary Purposes Rates for 1908 is justified in the circumstances; and whether it is intended to appoint a Commission of Inquiry into the annual expenditure of the Commissioners.

MR. CHURCHILL: The Secretary of State intends to obtain further information before forming an opinion on the question whether, in view of the depression of trade, the whole of the increase in the rates was immediately necessary; but he is advised that there is no sufficient justification for the appointment of a Commission of Inquiry.

Anglo-Russian Convention.

MR. REES: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the German Government has been informed of the fact that the Russian Foreign Minister gave a declaration in writing to the effect that the Anglo-Russian Convention does not affect British rights in the Persian Gulf.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. RUNCIMAN, Dewsbury; for Sir EDWARD GREY): The text of my right hon. friend's despatch to His Majesty's Ambassador at St. Petersburg, of the 29th of August last, taking note of the declaration of the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs on this subject, was communicated to the German Government together with the text of the Anglo-Russian Convention. This despatch was published with the Convention in the Parliamentary Paper (Russia, No. 1, 1907).

Mecca Pilgrims.

MR. WEDGWOOD (Newcastle-under-Lyme): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether any, and, if so, what steps are being taken to secure the safety of the Egyptian pilgrims proceeding to Mecca; and whether he anticipates any danger for those now at Yambo or Medina.

MR. RUNCIMAN: My right hon. friend has nothing to add to the information he gave to the hon. Member for Blackpool on the 26th inst. No report has since been received.

Probation of Offenders Act.

MR. ALDEN (Middlesex, Tottenham): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether, under the probation of Young Offenders Act, he can empower the probation officers to receive fines by instalments; whether he will recommend Courts of Summary Jurisdiction to adopt this course; whether, under part 3 of Clause 1 of the Probation Act, the words compensation for loss may be taken to include restitution of money stolen; and, if so, whether the services of probation officers can be utilised in collecting the same during the time the offender may be on probation.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. GLADSTONE, Leeds, W.): Where the Justices deal with an offender under the Probation of Offenders Act, there is no conviction, and consequently there can be no fine. The Justices may, however, order the offender to pay compensation for loss, which I am advised includes restitution of money stolen; and by Section 7 of the Summary Jurisdiction Act, 1879, the Justices may direct the payment to be made by instalments. It is within the powers of the Justices under that section to direct the instalments to be paid to the probation officer, and there may be cases where they might properly be required to do so; but there are officers attached to the Courts whose duty it is to receive sums which the Court orders to be paid, and in cases under the Probation Act I think it would be undesirable to do anything which would make the offender look on the probation officer as a collector of debts rather than as his friend and adviser.

Dock Accident.

MR. JOHN WARD (Stoke-on-Trent): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether, in the Bill proposed to be introduced this session dealing with accidents upon docks during construction, it is intended to retain the power to hold courts of inquiry into the cause and circumstances of accidents of a serious nature, as provided in Section 3 of the Notices of Accidents Act, 1894, which it is proposed to repeal.

MR. GLADSTONE: Yes, Sir; it is proposed to apply the provisions of the Factory Act with regard to accidents, which include a provision similar to that in the Act of 1894, empowering the Secretary of State to appoint a court of inquiry into the causes and circumstances of an accident if he thinks it expedient to do so.

Suppressed Licences in Staffordshire.

MR. JOHN WARD: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what number of licensed houses have been closed under the Licensing Act, 1904, in the county of Staffordshire during the years 1905–6–7; what was the total sum paid in compensation for such closing; and what sum was paid to the licence-holders and what sum to the other parties.

MR. GLADSTONE: All the available information is contained in the annual volumes of licensing statistics, but for the hon. Member's convenience I have had the following figures extracted from them. In the county of Staffordshire 163 licensed premises have been closed under the Act of 1904. A total sum of £102,780 was paid in compensation, of which £6,294 or 6·12 per cent. went to the licence holders.

Social Conditions in Germany.

MR. DU CROS (Hastings): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade when he expects to be in a position to publish the Report of the three investigators sent to Germany for the purpose of collecting information upon rent, wages, employment, and other matters.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE, Carnarvon Boroughs): I hope that the Report containing the results of investigations as to conditions and cost of living in German towns will be published in the course of a few weeks.

Norwegian Granite.

MR. FELL: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if he can now supply the information promised with regard to the wages and hours of work of the men engaged in the granite quarries in Norway which supply the stone to the Admiralty works at Haulbowline and Keyham dockyard.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: I am informed that in the granite quarries in Norway the usual hours of labour amount to fifty-seven per week, ten hours on five full workings days, and seven on Saturdays. The work appears to be generally undertaken by contract, and calculating on the basis of three hundred working days in the year, the wages usually earned are stated to be four kroner or five kroner (4s. 6d. or 5s. 7d.) per day.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.) asked whether the right hon. Gentleman could give the name of the Norwegian firm selected by the Admiralty to send granite into Ireland.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE said it was not in his Department, but he was informed that there was no such firm.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Where did they get the granite from.

[No Answer was returned.]

Granite Freightage.

MR. JOHN WARD: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he can state the cost of railway carriage per ton for Enderby granite from Leicester to Surbiton; and how such railway rates compare with the cost of freight for the same article from Norway to London.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: I am obtaining particulars of these rates and will communicate with my hon. friend as soon as I have received them.

Examination for Trawl Fishermen.

MR. PIRIE (Aberdeen, N.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if he would state what staff of examiners there is in Aberdeen for examining trawl fishermen under the Merchant Shipping Act, 1906; and if he can explain why the last examination of such candidates in Aberdeen was postponed from the date originally fixed.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: There is one examiner of fishermen at Aberdeen. Owing to the illness of the examiner during the examination the last examination was unavoidably postponed until a substitute could be obtained, but I understand that no inconvenience was caused to the three candidates who attended.

Mr. PIRIE asked if, according to the rules of the Board of Trade, there should not be three examiners, and why that regulation was not complied with in the case of Aberdeen?

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE said he would look into the matter and let his hon. friend know.

Danish Bacon.

Mr. LAURENCE HARDY (Kent, Ashford): I beg to ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether, in view of the exposure of the dangers arising from the export of bacon from Denmark which has been cured from diseased meat, the Board of Agriculture intend to take any steps to prevent the importation of Danish bacon until measures have been taken in that country to secure more effective control over the exports.

The PRESIDENT of the LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. John Burns, Battersea): Perhaps I may reply to this Question. As was stated on Thursday last, in reply to a Question put to me by the hon. Member for the Southern Division of Kerry, I do not think any special action is necessary at the present time as regards the importation of bacon from Denmark, but I have in preparation regulations dealing generally with the measures to be taken for the prevention of danger to health from the importation of foreign meat.

Anthrax.

Mr. LAURENCE HARDY: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether his attention has been called to the report of the inquest on James Shaw in the City Coroner's Court on 8th February; and whether he will take steps to extend the provisions with regard to the compulsory notification of disease to all cases of anthrax in human beings, arising from any cause, and to all cases of glanders in human beings, or of suspected glanders.

Mr. JOHN BURNS: My attention has been called to the report of the inquest referred to. It is competent for a sanitary authority, with the consent of the Local Government Board, to make cases of anthrax and glanders in man compulsorily notifiable in their district. I may, however, state that glanders is a rare disease as regards human beings. Cases of anthrax in man chiefly occur in factories and workshops, and as regards these cases arrangements are made by my right hon. friend the Secretary of State for information of them being given to the local medical officer of health.

Notification of Births Act.

Mr. ALDEN: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he can state the number of county boroughs, urban district councils, and other local authorities which have adopted the Notification of Births Act; and whether he can make any statement as to the measures that have already been taken by the large industrial centres of population?

Mr. JOHN BURNS: The Act has been adopted by 132 local authorities. In most of the districts in which it has been adopted there is one or more female health visitors, whose duty it is, in appropriate cases, to visit and advise the mothers of newly-born infants, and in some instances the local authority avail themselves of the co-operation of local voluntary associations. In all cases the health visitors act under the supervision of the medical officer of health.

Motor Speeds.

*Mr. CATHCART WASON (Orkney and Shetland): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Local Government Board whether, in view of the number of accidents caused by motors being driven at a rapid pace through towns and villages, favourable consideration will be given in the future to applications from local authorities for a reduction of speed limit within their jurisdiction?

Mr. JOHN BURNS: My best consideration is always given to applications under the Motor Car Act, 1903, for a reduction of speed limits, but I cannot say beforehand what course I shall feel justified in taking with regard to particular applications which may in future be made to me.

*MR. CATHCART WASON asked if the right hon. Gentleman was aware that the Motor Car Act, 1903, was only passed on the condition that the local authorities should have power to restrict speed, and that the Local Government Board should only act where regulations were excessive and unreasonable.

*MR. JOHN BURNS: As regards the nineteen applications under the Act received since 1st January, 1906, in which a decision has been given, orders have been issued or promised in fifteen of them. I think the Local Government Board is to be commended for its action in the matter.

Loss on Press Telegrams.

MR. WATT (Glasgow, College): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury how much is the annual loss to the Post Office incurred by the system of cheap rates for newspaper telegrams; what is the advantage derived by the nation in return for this loss; and if he will introduce legislation to put newspapers on the same terms in this respect as the general public.

THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON, Tower Hamlets, Poplar): The present rates for Press telegrams are specifically provided for under the Telegraph Act of 1868. The estimated annual loss involved is about £220,000, in return for which the nation enjoys such advantages as are derived from the dissemination of news at a cheap rate. I am not proposing legislation of the character suggested by my hon. friend.

Religious Instruction in Non-Provided Schools.

COLONEL WARDE (Kent, Medway): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education whether, under the terms of the proposed Education Bill, if a non-provided school is transferred to the local authority and religious instruction is demanded in accordance with the London County Council syllabus, it will be competent for teachers to claim that, inasmuch as there are to be no tests for teachers, they cannot be compelled to give the necessary instruction.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION (Mr. MCKENNA, Monmouthshire, N.): Yes, Sir. Under Clause 1, Sub-clause (1), of the Bill no teacher may be required, as a condition of his employment, to give any religious instruction.

Education Code.

SIR FRANCIS POWELL (Wigan): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education when he proposes to present the Education Code, with a view to the printing and circulation thereof at an early date.

MR. MCKENNA: I am not yet in a position to fix a date.

Dutch Cheese Frauds.

MR. A. L. STANLEY (Cheshire, Eddisbury): I beg to ask the hon. Member for South Somerset as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether he can now say whether he has any information as to the sale of Dutch skim-milk cheeses in this country under the name of either Dutch Cheshire cheeses or factory Cheshire cheeses; and what steps are being taken to put a stop to this practice.

THE TREASURER OF THE HOUSEHOLD (Sir EDWARD STRACHEY, Somersetshire, S.): Inquiries have been made into this matter, but no evidence has been obtained of the sale of Dutch cheeses in contravention of the Merchandise Marks Acts. We should be very glad to receive any further information on the subject which those concerned may be able to supply.

MR. A. L. STANLEY: Has the attention of the hon. Gentleman been called to a case in the Midlands in which a seller of this cheese was prosecuted and fined?

SIR EDWARD STRACHEY: Yes, Sir; but I think the offence charged in that case had to do with the percentage of fat contained in the cheese.

Imports of Peat-Moss Litter.

MR. LAURENCE HARDY: I beg to ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether, in view of the risk of infection from the importation of peat-moss litter, he will take steps to include it in the prohibition order which now only applies to forage.

SIR EDWARD STRACHEY: Perhaps the hon. Member will allow me to refer him to the reply given on the 26th inst. to a similar Question put by my hon. friend the Member for South-East Essex.

Farmers' Co-operative Societies.

MR. FELL: I beg to ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, if he is taking any steps to encourage amongst farmers the formation of co-operative societies for the collection and grading of farm produce such as eggs, butter, and fowls, and the marketing of it in London or elsewhere; and if his attention has been called to the success of some of these societies.

SIR EDWARD STRACHEY: We are aware of the success which has frequently attended the formation of co-operative societies for the purposes to which the hon. Member refers, and we have from time to time published information on the subject in our Journal. We have also issued leaflets on the subject, which have been widely circulated.

Margarine in Glasgow.

MR. BARRIE (Londonderry, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether he is aware that the Margarine Act is so inefficiently administered in Glasgow that unlabelled margarine is exhibited with impunity in numbers of shop windows throughout the city, ticketed in such a way as to lead the public to believe that it is Irish butter, and is also sold by these shopkeepers as butter and in parchment not bearing the word margarine; and whether he will take steps to put a stop to these practices.

SIR EDWARD STRACHEY: There is no doubt that margarine is sometimes sold as butter in Glasgow as in other large towns, but the local authority, with whom the enforcement of the law rests, informs us that everything that can be done to detect offences and to initiate proceedings against offenders in that city is being done, four inspectors being specially employed for the purpose. Our inspectors will be instructed to confer further with the officers of the local authority on the subject, and in the meantime the Board would be glad if the hon. Member would supply them with any information of which he may be in possession.

Peckham Election.

MR. RAMSAY MACDONALD (Leicester): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney-General whether his attention has been drawn to the activity of the many associations, other than political parties and candidates, committees, and agents, which took part in the Peckham election; whether he has considered how the expenditure of money which candidates do not declare in their returns, but which affect electoral results, can be rendered illegal so as to comply with the spirit of the Corrupt Practices Act; and whether he would appoint a Commission, with powers to send for documents and persons, to inquire into the actual costs of the Peckham election, and report to this House.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Sir W. ROBSON, South Shields): I have observed the activity of the associations mentioned by the hon. Member, and I think there can be no doubt that the expenditure to which he refers goes very far towards nullifying the effect of the beneficial provisions of the Corrupt Practices Act relating to the expenditure of candidates and their agents. However, in the present state of the law such expenditure is not *prima facie* illegal, but I am considering how far it may be possible effectively to limit expenditure of that kind without infringing the popular rights of political propaganda. Of course, hon. Members will appreciate that it is not easy to devise or to apply a scheme which would bring about the real control of expenditure not under the control of the candidates or their agents. However, the matter is one which will certainly engage the very careful attention of the Government. With regard to the Committee for which the hon. Member asks, it is not in my power to appoint such Committees, which must be appointed by statute, and are usually appointed upon some judicial report.

MR. MOORE (Armagh, N.): May I have a copy of the Answer?

SIR. W. ROBSON: The law officers have no department by which they could secure the drafting of their Answers.

SIR BRAMPTON GURDON (Norfolk, N.): Does not every candidate make a solemn declaration that no association or society has spent in connection with his election any money which does not appear in his return?

SIR W. ROBSON: I do not think he makes that declaration exactly in those terms. He makes a declaration in relation to the money spent in the conduct or management of the election, and it is a question of some nicety as to whether expenses by irresponsible strangers can be called expenses in conducting or managing an election.

MR. RAMSAY MACDONALD: Would it not be possible to hold some inquiry, even if a Commission was not possible, so that we may get information as to how much was spent over this election?

SIR W. ROBSON: I do not know of any usual or constitutional form of inquiry which does not involve Parliamentary sanction in the shape of a Bill, or some such form. A Departmental Committee might be appointed, but that would be very unusual in relation to an election.

LORD R. CECIL (Marylebone, E.): Would it be impossible to appoint a Select Committee?

SIR W. ROBSON: Well, it would not be of much use appointing any Committee which had not the power to take evidence on oath. I doubt the appropriateness of a Select Committee to inquire into an election.

*MR. R. DUNCAN (Lanarkshire, Govan) asked whether the Government would publish information as to the present state of the law on the subject, for the guidance of candidates.

SIR W. ROBSON said he believed it to be the impression of successive Governments that it had been made clear in the Corrupt Practices Act.

Registration of Titles in Scotland.

MR. C. E. PRICE (Edinburgh, Central): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland when the House will receive the Report from the Royal Commission appointed to inquire into the Registration of Titles in Scotland.

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Mr. SINCLAIR, Forfarshire): I am informed that it is not yet possible to name a date.

Trawling in St. Magnus Bay.

MR. CATHCART WASON: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland if he is aware that six trawlers were reported to the Fishery Board of Scotland as trawling within the limits on Saturday the 14th in St. Magnus Bay; if any have been arrested; and if he will consider the necessity of closing against trawling specified waters on the West Coast of Shetland, and also the waters between Orkney and Shetland known as the North Sound.

MR. SINCLAIR: I understand that such a report was made, but unfortunately without the definite particulars necessary to any action being taken. The Government has no power to close waters beyond the recognised territorial limits.

Royal Scottish Museum.

MR. MITCHELL-THOMSON: I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works whether many of the valuable and rare objects in the Royal Scottish Museum in Edinburgh are placed there on loan; and, if so, whether in case of fire occurring there, owing to the neglect to which attention is called in the Report for 1907, of precautions to remove premises stored with highly combustible materials from immediate proximity to the museum buildings, the Government will hold itself responsible to the lenders for any loss sustained by them.

MR. SINCLAIR: From time to time loan collections are exhibited in the museum. Before accepting any objects on loan for exhibition the owner is informed by letter that loans to the museum are at owners' risk and in particular that the museum authorities cannot undertake to insure against the risk of fire.

Mr. MITCHELL-THOMSON: When are the precautions referred to in the report likely to be taken?

Mr. YOUNGER (Ayr Burghs): Do not the insurance companies charge an extra premium for fire risks in consequence of these dangers?

Mr. SINCLAIR: I am quite aware of all these disadvantageous circumstances, but I can give the House no more information at present.

Scottish Sheriff Clerks.

Mr. WATT: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether he is aware that some sheriff clerks in Scotland are also engaged in trade and utilise the one function for the benefit of the other; and whether, in the public interest, he will bring pressure to bear on the existing sheriff clerks who are in that position and refrain from appointing such in future.

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. Thomas Shaw, Hawick Burghs): I shall be glad to have from my hon. friend the instances on which he bases this Question. I am not aware of any such cases; and before dealing with the general point involved it would be right to know any available details.

False Trade Descriptions.

Mr. CHARLES CRAIG (Antrim, S.): I beg to ask the Vice-President of the Department of Agriculture (Ireland) whether the Department's inspectors in England and Scotland have any special instructions with reference to obtaining evidence with a view to prosecutions in cases where linen is sold as Irish handloom woven damask when it does not answer to that description.

The VICE-PRESIDENT of the DEPARTMENT of AGRICULTURE for IRELAND (Mr. T. W. Russell, Tyrone, S.): The officers of the Department stationed in Great Britain, who are mainly engaged in the detection of frauds connected with Irish agriculture produce, have instructions to furnish the Department with any information they may obtain as to the application of false trade descriptions to any kind of Irish products. No special instructions have been given concerning any particular article of manufacture.

Mr. CHARLES CRAIG asked if any cases had recently arisen in which evidence had been tendered by the inspector.

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL said there was the other day a case of fraud at the Westminster Police Court in connection with Irish lace in which a conviction was secured.

Boxwell Evicted Tenants.

Mr. FFRENCH (Wexford, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that Mrs. Murphy, one of the Boxwell evicted tenants, now living in an uneconomic holding at Rostoonstown, where the dwelling-house and out-offices are in a wretched condition, claims the right to be restored to the farm from which she was evicted at Reedstown; whether the Estates Commissioners intend to give her farm to some other evicted tenant; and whether, as Mrs. Murphy is justly entitled to her old home, he will see that she is restored to it.

The CHIEF SECRETARY for IRELAND (Mr. Birrell, Bristol, N.): The cases of the evicted tenants on the Boxwell estate are at present being investigated by an inspector, and pending the receipt of his report the Estates Commissioners are not in a position to say what action will be taken in any particular case.

Case of James Brett, Evicted Tenant.

Mr. FFRENCH: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that James Brett, evicted tenant belonging to the estate of T. J. Walker, esq., expressed himself satisfied to pay the same number of years purchase as that paid by the other tenants, although this was considered an excessive price for the evicted farm by three practical farmers who are large holders in the neighbourhood; and if he can say why James Brett is not put back in his farm at a reasonable price.

Mr. BIRRELL: The Estates Commissioners are unable to add anything to the reply already given to the hon. Member, namely, that they are negotiating for the purchase of the estate in question, but an agreement has not yet been arrived at as to the price of the holding formerly occupied by James Brett.

Mr. George White's Leitrim Evicted Tenants.

MR. THOMAS F. SMYTH (Leitrim, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can state if the evicted tenants on the estate of Mr. George White, situate in county Leitrim, and which estate has been sold to the tenants within the past few weeks, have been reinstated in the holdings formerly occupied by them, or have the tenants in occupation of these holdings been permitted to sign purchase agreements.

MR. BIRRELL: The purchase agreements in the case of this estate have not yet been lodged with the Estates Commissioners, and consequently they have no information as to how the evicted tenants have been dealt with in the sale. Three applications for reinstatement have been received, and these have been referred to an inspector for inquiry.

The Union Jack on Irish National Schools.

CAPTAIN CRAIG (Down, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland what decision was come to by the Commissioners of Education in Ireland at their meeting on the 24th instant regarding the flying of the Union Jack on national school buildings where a general desire by the manager, parents, and pupils to do so is expressed.

MR. BIRRELL: The Commissioners determined to adhere to their former decision, namely, that they could not sanction the exhibition of flags of any kind in or upon national schools.

CAPTAIN CRAIG: Will the right hon. Gentleman and the Government make a special exception in the case of the Union Jack?

MR. BIRRELL: I think on a subject of this sort the opinion of the Commissioners of Education in Ireland as to what is likely best to promote loyalty and peace should not be departed from.

Cavan Townlands

MR. VINCENT KENNEDY (Cavan, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state whether the holdings of six tenants on the estate of George Stewart Smith, in the townlands of Lathnadronagh, Corlaturin, and Drumeagle, county Cavan, who refused to purchase on the landlord's terms, have yet been inspected; and, if so, when; has the report of the inspector justified their refusal to purchase on the terms offered; and will he say what recommendations are contained in the inspector's report.

MR. BIRRELL: The Estates Commissioners have received their inspector's report on this estate, including a report on the holding for which purchase agreements have not been lodged, and they are now in communication with the vendor with a view to having agreements for the sale of these holdings brought in. The Commissioners do not publish details of their inspectors' reports in such cases.

Wexford County Council and the Veterinary Surgeons Act, 1881.

MR. FFRENCH: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he aware that the Wexford County Council passed a resolution disapproving of the Amendment Bill to the Veterinary Surgeons Act of 1881; and whether, in view of the interference of this Bill with the interest of stockholders, the Government will alter it.

MR. BIRRELL: I have received resolutions from several county councils in Ireland protesting against the proposed amendment of the Veterinary Surgeons Acts. I understand that an Amendment Bill is being promoted by the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons. It has not yet been introduced and the question whether it will take the form of a Government measure has not been decided. The question of the Bill in its relation to Ireland is receiving the consideration of my hon. friend the Vice-President of the Department of Agriculture.

Case of John Bermingham.

MR. CHARLES CRAIG: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether Count Blake, of Cloughballymore, county Galway, has sold his estate to the Commissioners; whether John Bermingham was a tenant and bailiff to Count Blake; whether all Count Blake's tenants on the same estate have been given land to enlarge their holdings except John Bermingham; and why was an exception made in the case of John Bermingham.

MR. BIRRELL: The Estates Commissioners have agreed to purchase the estate in question, and have rearranged the holdings upon it. John Bermingham has surrendered about nine and a half acres and received in exchange about ten and a half acres. The Commissioners have no information as to his being bailiff to the owner, but they understand that he occupies three holdings in addition to his holding on this estate.

Ballinbull Cattle Drive.

MR. CHARLES CRAIG: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether cattle were driven from a farm in the townland of Ballinbull, near Ballina, on the 19th or 20th instant; and, if so, whether any arrests have been made in connection with it.

MR. BIRRELL: The police have been informed that on the 20th instant, the herd of a grazing farm at the place named found that a gate which he had left unlocked was standing open and that twenty-seven cattle were missing. The herd states that he called the cattle, according to his custom, to feed them, when the majority at once ran to him from an adjoining lane, and the remainder he found on the road close by. No arrests have been made.

Ballaghadalla Cattle Drive.

MR. CHARLES CRAIG: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, whether he is aware that on the night of the 19th instant, or early morning of the 20th instant, the cattle of Michael Kelly were driven from his farm at Ballaghadalla, near Ballina, county Mayo, which he holds on the eleven months system, and that cattle were also driven on the same night from another farm on the same townland; whether the police have been able to discover any of the persons who took part in these drives; and what steps are being taken to prevent the spread of cattle-driving in this district, which has hitherto been free from it.

MR. BIRRELL: The police have been informed that on the 20th instant, the gates of two farms in the townland mentioned were found lifted off their hinges, and fifteen head of cattle were missing from one farm, and nine from the other. All were found uninjured. The police have been unable to discover the persons who removed the gates. There are numerous grazing farms in this district, all of which are visited by police patrols as often as possible, with the object of preventing cattle driving.

The Glenaheiry Outrage.

MR. CHARLES CRAIG: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, whether the Inspector-General, when asked at the Waterford assizes to produce the original of the typed document of the 11th September, copies of which were furnished to Lord Ashtown and the rural district council, declined to produce it, but was compelled to do so under the order of the presiding Judge; whether the document when produced had upon its face certain erasures and interlineations; and, if so, will he state when and by whom these erasures were made and in whose handwriting are the interlineations.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. CHERRY, Liverpool, Exchange): The document which the Inspector-General produced at Waterford assizes was not, strictly speaking, the original of the statement of 11th September furnished to the parties, but was District Inspector Preston's original unsigned draft of that statement. The Inspector-General had with him at the time, on the official file, the signed statement itself, but as, through inadvertence, it had been marked Copy, he considered that he could not properly hand it in as being the original. The unsigned draft which was produced contains some erasures and interlineations, all of which were made by the District Inspector himself. These alterations are mostly verbal, and they do not affect the sense of the statement as originally drafted by the District Inspector. They were made by him on the date of the statement before the fair copies were made for transmission to the parties. I have here both the draft and the signed statement taken from the file, and if the hon.

Member still has any doubt about the matter I shall be happy to produce both documents for his inspection.

Mr. MOORE asked whether the right hon. Gentleman had not already stated that District Inspector Preston had destroyed his unsigned draft.

Mr. CHERRY: I do not think I made any such statement. I said he had destroyed some papers.

Mr. MOORE: Did not the right hon. Gentleman say the paper he had destroyed was the unsigned draft of the 11th September.

Mr. CHERRY: Certainly not.

Mr. CHARLES CRAIG: At what time will it be convenient to the right hon. Gentleman for me to inspect the letter?

Mr. CHERRY: Now, or at any time during to-day or to-morrow.

Mr. CHARLES CRAIG: To-day at ten minutes past four?

Mr. CHERRY: Certainly.

Land Sales in County Longford.

Mr. J. P. FARRELL (Longford, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will give a Return showing the order of priority in which applications for sales of estates to tenants in county Longford now stand; how many applications have been altogether received; and in how many cases inspection has been ordered.

Mr. BIRRELL: The Estates Commissioners have received applications for the sale of eighty-seven estates in county Longford, and inspections have been made in the case of forty-four of these estates. The Estates Commissioners are not prepared to give a Return showing the order of priority of application in the different cases. If it were given in the case of one county it could not be withheld in others, and as there are nearly 4,000 estates in all, the preparation of Returns would involve an immense amount of labour for which there would be no commensurate result.

Maconchy Estate, North Longford.

Mr. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the vesting orders to the tenant purchasers of the Maconchy estate in North Longford have yet been issued.

Mr. BIRRELL: Yes, Sir, with the exception of a few cases in which advances have not yet been sanctioned.

Cost of Teaching Irish in National Schools.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland what was the amount of the expenditure on fees for the teaching of Irish in national schools set aside by the Commissioners of National Education in their Estimate for the year 1907–8, and what was the amount set aside under the same head in their Estimate for 1908–9.

Mr. BIRRELL: The amounts provided by the Commissioners of National Education for the payment of fees for instruction in Irish are: In the Estimates for 1907–8, £5,000; and in the Estimates for 1908–9, £14,400.

Marlborough Street Training College.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant in Ireland what was the total number of King's scholars who were trained in the National Board's Training College, Marlborough Street, and the six training colleges under private management from 1900 to 1906 inclusive; and what was the total number such King's scholars who obtained certificates of competency to teach Irish.

Mr. BIRRELL: The Commissioners of National Education inform me that during the seven years 1900 to 1906 inclusive, the total number of King's scholars in attendance at the training colleges was 4,432, of whom 3,794 completed their training during that period. The number of King's scholars who obtained certificates of competency to teach Irish during the period in question was 321.

Maintenance of Lunatics in Ireland.

Mr. CHARLES CRAIG: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether in view of the feeling which exists in Ireland that many of the inmates of lunatic asylums in Ireland are, either out of their own property or that of near relatives, able to pay the whole or part of their maintenance and are not in fact pauper lunatics in the ordinary sense of the word, he will grant the Return relating to Lunatic Asylums (Ireland) standing on to-day's Paper in the name of the hon. Member for South Antrim.

[The Return was as follows :—Lunatic Asylums (Ireland), Return showing, with reference to the inmates of Lunatic Asylums in Ireland which are supported out of public funds, (1) the names and age of each inmate; (2) the date of his or her admission; (3) his or her occupation or station in life at the time of admission; (4) what property the inmate or his or her relatives contribute to his or her support; (5) whether the inmate is a proper subject for a pauper asylum; (6) what steps have been taken in each case to ascertain what property the inmate is possessed of; and (7) what steps have been taken in each case to recoup the asylum for the support of the inmate.]

MR. BIRRELL: It would be quite impracticable to give the Return asked for. There are some 20,000 pauper lunatics in public asylums in Ireland, and with the exception of the capitation grant of 4s. from the local taxation account, the cost of maintenance falls on the local authorities. The duty of obtaining payment for maintenance, where possible, from the property of the lunatic or his relatives devolves upon the lunatic asylum committees, and I am informed that as a rule these committees are energetic in enforcing payment when they can legally do so. The inspectors of lunatic asylums are not aware of any general feeling that many of the inmates of lunatic asylums are able to pay for their maintenance, or have relatives who can do so. In any event it would not be practicable to set out in the form of a Return the steps taken by the committees in 20,000 separate cases to ascertain what property the lunatic may have.

Belfast Health Commission.

MR. J. DEVLIN (Belfast, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state when the Report of the Belfast Health Commission will be issued.

MR. BIRRELL: I am informed that through unforeseen causes the Commissioners have not yet been able to complete their Report. They expect, however, to do so in the course of the present week.

Land Dispute in County Cavan.

MR. VINCENT KENNEDY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, if he will state whether some eight tenants on the Crookenden and Casey estate, County Cavan, were visited by the sheriff on the 12th March, and at what hour; had the sheriff an escort, and what was its composition; what did the sheriff realise; will any charge fall on the ratepayers for this expedition; and will he represent to the Estates Commissioners the urgency of having this sale put through if the tenants are not to be made paupers on the eve of the sale taking place.

MR. BIRRELL: In the eight cases referred to, in which purchase agreements have been lodged, the tenants had failed to pay the interest due on their purchase money, and proceedings were therefore taken by the Land Commission for the recovery of the interest. On 12th March, at 7 a.m., the sheriff, protected by a force of fifty police, visited the holdings in order to execute the decrees, but failed to make any seizure because the tenants had removed their cattle. The police belonged to the county force, and no charge, therefore, can be made against the local authorities. I am informed that out of 437 tenants who have lodged purchase agreements only sixteen, including the eight in question, have failed to pay the interest due 1st May last. The Estates Commissioners are considering the question of purchasing the estate themselves.

Ireland and the Hobhouse Report.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General how much of the £750,000 of the increased Postal Estimates will go to the Irish service; will the wages in Dundalk Post Office under the new postal scheme be reduced 1s. a week for new entrants and its postmen placed in Class 5, the same as neighbouring villages where rent and living are much cheaper; do postmen in Newry rank in Class 4; are the existing postmen in Dundalk seventeen years without an increase of pay; and upon what ground are they not to share in the benefits granted to men in similar positions.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: I presume that my hon. friend, in giving the figure £750,000, is referring to the cost of 1908–9 of the Stanley revision as well as the increases due to the acceptance of the recommendations of the Parliamentary Committee. The figure s substantially correct, but the total increase in the Post Office Estimates for 1908–9 is £947,000. The increase cannot readily be allocated between the three countries. But the Irish share would be rather more than the normal proportion of Post Office expenditure, inasmuch as so many of the smaller Irish towns are being raised as regards the postmen's pay. The classification of both Newry and Dundalk is in suspense. Their final classification will, as recommended by the Committee, depend partly on the volume of work and partly on the cost of living.

MR. MOORE: Has not Lurgan been treated in the same way as Dundalk, and if Dundalk is raised will Lurgan be treated in the same way?

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: I do not know much about Lurgan. Both places are in suspense. I will bear in mind what the hon. Member says.

Fiscal Question.

MR. GOULDING (Worcester): I beg to ask the Prime Minister whether in view of the desire among all sections of the House to discuss the fiscal question, and the necessity for full and authoritative information as to the causes and extent of unemployment, he will see his way to allot a day for the consideration of the subject.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. ASQUITH, Fife, E.): In view of the great pressure of business and the large number of Bills that have been introduced, I regret that it is impossible to give a day. At the same time, I may point out that the notice of Motion which has been put down for to-morrow evening seems to afford a convenient opportunity for raising the first part of the question.

MR. GOULDING: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the Motion to which he refers deals chiefly with raising revenue, and does not raise unemployment?

MR. ASQUITH: Are they not related one to the other?

Easter Vacation.

MR. REES: I beg to ask the Prime Minister if he can give the House any information regarding the date and duration of the Easter holidays.

MR. ASQUITH: From Wednesday night, 15th April, till Monday 27th April.

Port of London Bill.

VISCOUNT CASTLEREAGH: I beg to ask the Prime Minister if he will state on what date the Port of London Bill will be introduced.

MR. ASQUITH: I hope on Thursday.

VISCOUNT CASTLEREAGH: Will the whole day be devoted to it?

MR. ASQUITH: No. It will be brought in under the Ten Minutes rule.

VISCOUNT CASTLEREAGH asked whether it was fitting that so important a Bill, involving £25,000,000, should be introduced under this rule.

MR. ASQUITH: There will be very ample opportunity to consider the Bill and discuss it on Second Reading.

On-Licences.

MR. SAMUEL ROBERTS (Sheffield, Ecclesall): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he is aware that there are in existence a number of on-licences, the full monopoly value of which has been paid by their owners in accordance with Section 4 of The Licensing Act, 1904; and whether it is intended under the provisions of the Licensing Bill now before Parliament that these licences shall, after fourteen years, be subject to extinction without compensation as if they were licences for which no monopoly value had been paid.

MR. ASQUITH: I am aware that there are in existence on-licences, in respect of which the persons to which the persons to whom the licence was granted have paid "monopoly value," under Section 4 of the Licensing Act of 1904. Under that Act the holders of these licences are not entitled to compensation on the extinction of their licences; and the Bill makes no difference in this respect.

MR. SAMUEL ROBERTS: Will the right hon. Gentleman make some provision in Committee to deal with cases of this kind?

MR. ASQUITH: The Bill does not alter the law in any way in regard to this.

MR. SAMUEL ROBERTS: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that many large sums have been paid in such cases—in one as much as £3,000?

MR. ASQUITH: I am well aware of that.

MR. LEIF JONES (Westmoreland, Appleby): Is it not the case that the longest period for which licences are granted under this Act is seven years, and does not that dispose of the claim to a vested interest?

MR. ASQUITH asked for notice.

Building Societies and Income-Tax.

MR. LEVY LEVER (Harwich): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether the arrangement made with building societies as regards exemption from payment of income-tax upon borrowers' interest, as sanctioned by form No. 13, Building Societies (Arrangement B) Income-Tax, may be extended to registered friendly societies upon similar information being supplied by them as now given by building societies.

MR. ASQUITH: Arrangements are made for exempting as far as possible borrowers' interest paid to friendly societies. The case of friendly societies is not analogous to that of building societies, which enjoy no statutory exemption from income-tax, and the arrangement made with the latter class of societies would not therefore be applicable to the former.

Housing Bill.

MR. MACKARNESS (Berkshire, Newbury) asked if, in view of the few hours available on Wednesday for the debate on the Housing and Town Planning Bill, the Government would give one additional day for the discussion of this very important measure.

MR. ASQUITH: If the debate is not concluded on Wednesday it will probably be resumed on the following Monday week, but I hope that only a part of the sitting on that day will be required to finish it.

NEW MEMBER SWORN.

WILLIAM JOHN MACGEAGH MACGAW, esquire, for the county of Down (West Down Division).

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (GOVERNMENT OF IRELAND).

Motion made, and Question put," "That the Proceedings on the Motion relating to the Government of Ireland, if under discussion at Eleven o'clock this night, be not interrupted under the Standing Order (Sittings of the House)."—(*The Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

The House divided; Ayes, 294; Noes, 84. (Division List, No. 58.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Acland, Francis Dyke
Agnew, George William
Alden, Percy
Allen, A.Acland (Christchurch)
Allen, Charles P. (Stroud)
Ambrose, Robert
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Asquith, Rt.Hn.Herbert Henry
Astbury, John Meir
Atherley-Jones, L.
Baker, Sir John (Portsmouth)
Balfour, Robert (Lanark)
Baring, Godfrey (Isle of Wight)
Barker, John
Barlow, Sir John E. (Somerset)
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Barnard, E. B.
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Barry, Redmond J.(Tyrone,N.)
Beale, W. P.
Beauchamp, E.
Beaumont, Hon. Hubert
Beck, A. Cecil
Bellairs, Carlyon
Belloc, Hilaire Joseph Peter R.
Benn,Sir J.Williams(Devonp'rt.
Benn,W.(T'w'r Hamlets,S.Geo.
Bennett, E. N.
Bertram, Julius
Bethell,Sir J.H.(Essex,Romf'rd
Bethell, T. R. (Essex, Maldon)
Birrell, Rt. Hon. Augustine
Black, Arthur W.
Boland, John
Bottomley, Horatio

Boulton, A. C. F.
Bowerman, C. W.
Branch, James
Brocklehurst, W. B.
Bryce, J. Annan
Burke, E. Haviland-
Burns, Rt. Hon. John
Burt, Rt. Hon. Thomas
Buxton, Rt.Hn.Sydney Charles
Byles, William Pollard
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Causton,Rt.Hn.RichardKnight
Chance, Frederick William
Channing, Sir Francis Allston
Cherry, Rt. Hon. R. R.
Churchill, Rt. Hon. Winston S.
Clancy, John Joseph
Cleland, J. W.
Clough, William
Cobbold, Felix Thornley
Collins, Stephen (Lambeth)
Collins,Sir Wm.J.(S.Pancras,W
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Cooper, G. J.
Corbett,C H(Sussex,E.Grinst'd
Cornwall, Sir Edwin A.
Cory, Sir Clifford John
Cotton, Sir H. J. S.
Cox, Harold
Crean, Eugene
Crooks, William
Crosfield, A. H.
Cullinan, J.
Davies, M. Vaughan- (Cardigan
Davies, Timothy (Fulham)
Delany, William
Devlin, Joseph
Dickinson,W. H.(St.Pancras,N.
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dillon, John
Dobson, Thomas W.
Donelan, Captain A.
Duckworth, James
Duffy, William J.
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)
Dunne,Major E.Martin(Walsall
Edwards, Sir Francis (Radnor)
Elibank, Master of
Ellis, Rt. Hon. John Edward
Erskine, David C.
Essex, R. W.
Esslemont, George Birnie
Everett, R. Lacey
Faber, G. H. (Boston)
Farrell, James Patrick
Ferens, T. R.
Ferguson, R. C. Munro
Ffrench, Peter
Findlay, Alexander
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Foster, Rt. Hon. Sir Walter
Freeman-Thomas, Freeman
Fuller, John Michael F.
Furness, Sir Christopher
Gibb, James (Harrow)
Gilhooly, James
Gladstone,Rt.Hn.Herbert John
Glen-Coats, Sir T. (Renfrew,W.
Gooch, George Peabody (Bath)
Greenwood, G. (Peterborough)
Gulland, John W.
Gurdon,Rt Hn.SirW.Brampton
Gwynn, Stephen Lucius
Halpin, J.
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Lewis
Hardy, George A. (Suffolk)
Harmsworth, Cecil B. (Worc'r)
Harrington, Timothy
Hart-Davies, T.
Harwood, George
Hayden, John Patrick
Hazleton, Richard
Healy, Timothy Michael
Hedges, A. Paget
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Henry, Charles S.
Herbert, T. Arnold (Wycombe)
Higham, John Sharp
Hobart, Sir Robert
Holland, Sir William Henry
Hope,W.Bateman (Somerset,N
Horniman, Emslie John
Horridge, Thomas Gardner
Hudson, Walter
Hyde, Clarendon
Idris, T. H. W.
Illingworth, Percy H.
Jardine, Sir J.
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kekewich, Sir George
Kennedy, Vincent Paul
Kettle, Thomas Michael
Kilbride, Denis
King, Alfred John (Knutsford)
Laidlaw, Robert
Lamb, Edmund G. (Leominster
Lambert, George
Lamont, Norman
Lardner,James Carrige Rushe
Law, Hugh A. (Donegal, W.)
Leese,Sir Joseph F.(Accrington
Lehmann, R. C.
Lever, A. Levy(Essex,Harwich
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, Rt. Hon. David
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
Lyell, Charles Henry
Macdonald, J. R. (Leicester)
Macdonald,J. M.(Falkirk Bg'hs
Mackarness, Frederic C.
MacVeagh, Jeremiah (Down, S.
MacVeigh,Charles (Donegal,E.)
M'Callum, John M.
M'Crae, George
M'Kean, John
M'Kenna, Rt. Hon. Reginald
M'Killop, W.
M'Micking, Major G.
Maddison, Frederick
Mallet, Charles E.
Marks,G.Croydon (Launceston)
Marnham, F. J.
Massie, J.
Masterman, C. F. G.
Meagher, Michael
Meehan,Francis E.(Leitrim,N.)
Meehan,Patrick A.(Queen's Co.
Montagu, E. S.
Mooney, J. J.
Morgan, G. Hay (Cornwall)
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Morse, L. L.
Muldoon, John
Murnaghan, George
Murphy, John (Kerry, East)
Murphy, N. J. (Kilkenny, S.)
Myer, Horatio
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Napier, T. B.
Nicholls, George
Nicholson,Charles N.(Doncast'r
Nolan, Joseph
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Walter Richard
O'Brien,Kendal(Tipperary Mid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, William (Cork)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Doherty, Philip
O'Donnell, C. J. (Walworth)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Grady, J.
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Kelly,James (Roscommon,N.
O'Malley, William
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
O'Shee, James John
Parker, James (Halifax)
Partington, Oswald
Pearce, Robert (Staffs, Leek)
Pearce, William (Limehouse)
Perks, Robert William
Philipps, Owen C. (Pembroke)
Phillips, John (Longford, S.)
Pirie, Duncan V.
Pollard, Dr.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, C. E. (Edinb'gh, Central)
Pullar, Sir Robert
Rainy, A. Rolland
Raphael, Herbert H.
Rea, Russell (Gloucester)
Rea, Walter Russell (Scarboro')
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Rees, J. D.
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robertson,Rt. Hn. E.(Dundee)
Robertson,SirG.Scott(Bradf'rd
Robertson, J. M. (Tyneside)
Robinson, S.
Robson, Sir William Snowdon
Roche, Augustine (Cork)
Roche, John (Galway, East)
Rogers, F. E. Newman
Runciman, Walter
Russell, T. W.
Rutherford, V. H. (Brentford)
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Schwann,Sir C.E.(Manchester)
Scott,A.H.(Ashton-under-Lyne
Sears, J. E.
Seely, Colonel
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Rt. Hon. T. (Hawick B.)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, Rt. Hon. John
Smeaton, Donald Mackenzie

Smyth, Thomas F. (Leitrim, S.)
Soares, Ernest J.
Spicer, Sir Albert
Stanger, H. Y.
Stanley, Albert (Staffs, N. W.)
Stanley, Hn. A.Lyulph(Chesh.)
Strachey, Sir Edward
Stuart, James (Sunderland)
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Tennant, SirEdward(Salisbury)
Tennant, H. J. (Berwickshire)
Thomas, Sir A. (Glamorgan,E.)
Thomasson, Franklin
Thompson,J.W.H.(Somerset, E
Torrance, Sir A. M.
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Ure, Alexander
Verney, F. W.
Villiers, Ernest Amherst
Vivian, Henry
Waldron, Laurence Ambrose
Walsh, Stephen
Ward, John (Stoke-upon-Trent
Ward,W.Dudley(Southampt'n)
Wardle, George J.
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason,Rt Hn.E.(Clackmannan
Wason, John Cathcart(Orkney)
Waterlow, D. S.
Watt, Henry A.
Wedgwood, Josiah C.
Whitbread, Howard
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
White, Patrick (Meath, North)
Whitehead, Rowland
Whitley, John Henry (Halifax)
Wiles, Thomas
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Wilson, P. W. (St. Pancras, S.)
Wood, T. M'Kinnon

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Whiteley and Mr. J. A. Pease.

NOES.

Anstruther-Gray, Major
Arnold-Forster, Rt Hn. Hugh O.
Ashley, W. W.
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt Hn.A.J.(CityLond.)
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Baring,Capt.Hn.G.(Winchester
Barrie, H. T. (Londonderry,N.)
Beckett, Hon. Gervase
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bowles, G. Stewart
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Butcher, Samuel Henry
Campbell, Rt. Hon. J. H. M.
Carlile, E. Hildred
Castlereagh, Viscount
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord John P. Joicey-
Cecil, Lord R. (Marylebone, E.)
Chamberlain, Rt Hn.J.A(Worc.
Clark, George Smith
Coates, E.Feetham (Lewisham)
Collings, Rt.Hn.J.(Birmingh'm
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Courthope, G. Loyd
Craig,Charles Curtis(Antrim,S.)
Craig, Capt. James (Down, E.)
Craik, Sir Henry
Doughty, Sir George
Du Cros, Arthur Philip
Duncan, Robert(Lanark,Govan
Faber, George Denison (York)
Fell, Arthur
Fetherstonhaugh, Godfrey
Forster, Henry William
Gardner, Ernest
Gibbs, G. A. (Bristol, West)
Gordon, J.
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Guinness, Walter Edward
Hamilton, Marquess of
Hardy, Laurence(Kent,Ashf'rd
Harrison-Broadley, H. B.
Hemsley, Viscount
Hill, Sir Clement
Hills, J. W.
Kimber, Sir Henry
Lambton, Hon. Frederick Wm.
Law, Andrew Bonar (Dulwich)
Lockwood,Rt.Hn. Lt.-Col.A.R.
Long,Rt.Hn.Walter(Dublin, S.
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
MacGaw, William J. MacGeagh
M'Calmont, Colonel James
Magnus, Sir Philip
Mason, James F.(Windsor)
Meysey-Thompson, E. C.
Moore, William
Nicholson, Wm.G. (Petersfield)
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Parker,Sir Gilbert (Gravesend)
Pease,Herbert Pike(Darlington
Percy, Earl
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Randles, Sir John Scurrah
Remnant, James Farquharson
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roberts, S. (Sheffield,Ecclesall)
Ronaldshay, Earl of
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Sheffield,Sir BerkeleyGeorge D.
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Starkey, John R.
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Talbot,Rt.Hn.J.G.(Oxf'd Univ.
Thomson,W.Mitchell- (Lanark)
Thornton, Percy M.
Wilson, A.Stanley (York, E.R.)
Winterton, Earl
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Younger, George

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Viscount Valentia.

GOVERNMENT OF IRELAND.

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford), in moving "That the present system of government in Ireland is in opposition to the will of the Irish people, and gives them no voice in the management of their own affairs; that the system is consequently inefficient and extravagantly costly; that it does not enjoy the confidence of any section of the population; that it is productive of universal discontent and unrest, and is incapable of satisfactorily promoting the material and intellectual progress of the people: that the reform of Irish government is a matter vital to the interests of Ireland, and calculated greatly to promote the well-being of the people of Great Britain; and, in the opinion of this House, the solution of this problem can only be obtained by giving to the Irish people the legislative and executive control of all purely Irish affairs," said: The recent history of the Home Rule movement and the circumstances in which the question of Home Rule stands at this moment render in my opinion, the Resolution which I have the honour to move necessary from the point of view of the interest of everybody concerned, from the point of view of England and of Ireland, from the point of view of the Liberal majority in this House, and if I may say so of the Government.

The Home Rule question stands at this moment in a strange and anomalous position—a position which cannot indefinitely continue. We are assembled here in a House of Commons the overwhelming majority of which is made up of men who have always professed their belief that the only solution of the Irish problem is the concession of Home Rule to Ireland—and of men, let me say, most of whom in season and out of season have made public profession of that belief. And we have in office a Government of whom I can truthfully say that every man of it at one time or another has given public pledges to the same effect; and yet owing to the circumstances which surrounded the last election and the period immediately before it they find themselves, they say, debarred from giving legislative effect in this Parliament to those convictions that they have expressed. I, for myself, deplored the circumstances as they arose which they say debarred them, and I deplore them still, but I must perforce recognise facts, and I believe it is a fact that certain members—I do not know how many—of the present Government, and a considerable number of members of the rank and file of the Liberal Party, did at the last election, quite gratuitously as it seemed to me, pledge themselves to their constituents that they would not introduce Home Rule as we understand it, or attempt to give legislative effect to it as we understand it, during the life of this Parliament. I may perhaps be allowed to recall with gratitude that the Prime Minister made no such declaration, and at this moment when everybody, political friend and foe alike, are watching with strained anxiety by his bedside, it is a sincere gratification to me to be able to say that it will never be forgotten by Ireland that no stress of circumstances induced him to lower the Home Rule flag, or to declare that he would postpone the demand of Ireland. This anomalous and illogical position, namely, of a great and powerful Government commanding a great and powerful majority in this House, all pledged to the principle of Home Rule, but yet debarred by their declarations at the election from introducing legislation to give effect in this Parliament, makes it, in my judgment, necessary in everybody's interest, as I have said, that this Resolution should be moved, in order that we may find our bearings, in order to enable this Government and this House at least to place upon record the convictions that they entertain, and if I may say so, to free the hand of the Liberal Party and the members of the Government at the next election, so as to make sure that then, at any rate, the question of Home Rule will not be excluded from the consideration of the electors. There is another consideration why in my judgment this Resolution is necessary, and that is to be found in the history of the Irish Council Bill last year. That was not a Home Rule Bill. It was not offered to us as a Home Rule Bill—there was no deception attempted on the part of the Government—still it was recommended to us as a step in the direction of Home Rule. Our attitude on this question of what is called the policy of the half-way house has never been in any doubt. In public and in private, formally and informally, on the floor of this House and everywhere where we have spoken for the last twenty-five years, we have declared our conviction that nothing could settle this question except the creation by this Parliament of a legislative assembly in Ireland, with executive powers. We have declared with equal emphasis that in our judgment it would pass the art of man to devise a satisfactory or logical half-way house upon this question. But when we found, as we did find, that the Government felt themselves debarred from introducing the only possible solution in our minds, we then frankly did our best to aid the Government in drafting a Bill that would have been regarded as a tolerable Bill. We put our views as to the constitution of the body to be created fully before the Government, and while I am the first to admit that the Chief Secretary did his best to meet these views, and that the Government went what, no doubt, they regarded as a considerable distance to meet those views, at the same time those views were not fully met, and we felt that the question of the acceptance or rejection of this half-way house must be discussed and decided, not by us on the floor of this House, but by the Irish people in Ireland. The question was discussed, and with practical unanimity it was decided. I know there is a difference of opinion, even amongst the best friends of Ireland, as to whether that action of ours was wise or unwise. I am not going to discuss that question now. I point to the Council Bill of last year for the purpose simply of fortifying myself when I say that that history shows that the dealing with this question of Home Rule by a half-way house measure is now no longer possible, and that consideration in my mind makes it necessary for me and my colleagues to put this Resolution before the House claiming a full settlement of the question. That, Mr. Speaker, is the intention and meaning of my Resolution.

I notice that there are quite a number of Amendments upon the Paper. There are only two, however, with which I think it necessary very briefly to deal. The first is the Amendment standing in the name of the noble Lord the Member for South Kensington. I regard his Amendment as raising a perfectly straight and uncompromising issue. I therefore welcome his Amendment. His Amendment is certainly uncompromising, for it would preclude not only a Home Rule Bill, but it would equally preclude the Council Bill of last year. Under its terms it would actually preclude the possibility of even private Bill legislation being taken from this House and given to an Irish assembly. But the noble Lord's Amendment indicates no alternative policy to Home Rule, and in my judgment no hon. Member can vote for that Amendment who is not prepared to say that the present system of government in Ireland—which has been denounced by almost every Lord-Lieutenant who has gone there for the last thirty-five years, no matter from what Party he came—is satisfactory and sufficient. Again I say that I welcome the noble Lord's Amendment because it raises a perfectly plain issue—on the one side trust in the people and, on the other, the old Tory policy of repression. The other Amendment to which I think it necessary to allude for a moment stands in the name of the hon. Member for Walthamstow. It is the last Amendment of the string that stand upon the Paper, and it is a proposal desiring to add at the end of my Resolution words safeguarding the supremacy of the Imperial Parliament. I regard those words as unnecessary and superfluous, and in my judgment they add nothing whatever to the meaning of my Resolution. We have always recognised the supremacy of the Imperial Parliament, and we have always held the view that it would be impossible to alienate that supremacy in creating a statutory legislation for Ireland. The Bill of 1886 was based upon the maintenance of the supremacy of this Parliament. The preamble—the very first words—of Mr. Gladstone's Bill of 1893 were these—

> "Without impairing or restricting the supremacy of the Imperial Parliament a legislature shall be created."

We have never made any disguise about this matter. Allow me to quote two or three words spoken by Mr. Parnell with reference to this question when it came up in 1886. On 7th June in that year Mr. Parnell said—

> "The right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Edinburgh (Mr. Goschen) spoke about the sovereignty of Parliament. I entirely agree upon that point. We have always known the difference between a co-ordinate and a subordinate Parliament, and we have always recognised that the legislature which the Prime Minister proposes to constitute is a subordinate Parliament. You leave the power and supremacy of Parliament untouched and unimpaired just as though this Bill had never been brought forward. We fully recognise this to be the effect of the Bill, and I now repeat what I have always said, that the Irish people have accepted it as a settlement."

That has been our position from that day to this. The Irish Parliamentary Party from the day of that declaration down to this moment has never abandoned the position then taken up, and I say to the hon. and learned Member for Walthamstow that in my judgment his words are superfluous; but if he or any other friends of Home Rule for Ireland—and I recognise that the hon. and learned Member is a friend of Home Rule—desires to add those words, although we think them unnecessary and superfluous, we certainly will accept them.

Now, let me turn to the main argument in support of my Resolution. I do not want to delay the House by repeating once again the old old arguments which, though they still hold good to-day, have been repeated so often in this House—repeated by myself so often in this Parliament—that they must be familiar to hon. Members sitting in all quarters of the House. What I want this afternoon is to show if I can that an entirely new situation has arisen within the last twenty years since this question was last discussed. I will not therefore go in detail into the proofs of the failure of British Governments in Ireland since the Union. I will not stop to dwell on the meaning of the reduction of the population in fifty years by one-half, I will not stop to discuss this afternoon the damning proof of the failure of your Government to be found in the fact that on the admission of both sides of the House education in all its branches is lamentably neglected, but in passing perhaps the House will allow me to say on that subject just this: what a commentary on British rule in Ireland it is that to-morrow we are going to discuss an effort—I hope it will prove a successful effort—to deal with University education in Ireland. It is just thirty-five years since the Prime Minister of this country introduced a measure to settle that question, and all during those thirty-five years the representatives of each Government in turn on coming into office have admitted the justice of the demand, admitted the grievance, and we have had to wait thirty-five years for the effort which is to be made to-morrow by the Chief Secretary for Ireland. That in itself would be sufficient to condemn the whole system of government in Ireland. Nor will I stop to dwell on the taxation of Ireland—doubled per head of the population in the last fifty years. I will not stop to deal with the question of the extravagant cost of Irish government, because the powerful statement of my hon. and learned friend the Member for East Tyrone last Thursday sufficiently covered that portion of the Home Rule case, and because there was something in the debate of last Thursday more powerful than the speech of my hon. and learned friend. The extravagant waste and the excessive cost was admitted by speakers in every quarter of the House, and yet no man could be found to suggest any other solution than to hand over these matters to the government of the Irish people themselves. Therefore I pass from these familiar topics of argument simply saying that Ireland to-day is worse governed, is more discontented with your rule, and is more determined never to cease her demand until she has received Home Rule, than at any period of the Home Rule controversy. I say that an entirely new situation has arisen with reference to this question since 1886 and 1893. New facts have arisen, new circumstances have appeared, and the whole political position has really been revolutionised. First of all, let me point out that almost without exception every one of those great arguments which were urged against Home Rule in those days and which had so much weight with the people of this country, and which led to the defeat of the Home Rule Bills, has since then disappeared, and more extraordinary still they have been disposed of and put out of the way by legislation of the Unionist Party. What were these great arguments? First of all, there was the argument that Irishmen were unfit to rule themselves. I do not think many people put faith in that so crudely as Lord Salisbury did when he mentioned the Irish race in connection with Hottentots as among those races unfitted for the exercise of self-government. But there is no question that probably the most powerful of all the arguments against Home Rule in its effect in the country twenty years ago was the argument pressed upon the English people that Ireland herself would run the terrible risk of being ruined under Home Rule by incompetence, extravagance, and jobbery. What has become of that argument? The Local Government Act of 1898 was passed by the Unionist Government. Let me remind hon. Gentlemen opposite that it was not a half measure. The present Leader of the Opposition, I think it was, two or three years earlier did introduce a half measure on this question of local government and very soon withdrew it. The measure of 1898 was a full measure based on the same trust in the people that underlies the Local Government Act which is at work both in England and in Scotland, and the Chief Secretary of that day, Mr. Gerald Balfour—whose absence from this House I confess I regret very much when all these Irish questions are discussed, though we differed very often—made one very remarkable statement in the course of debate of that Bill; he said—

> "If the Irish people do their work with business capacity and in a spirit of toleration, it will mitigate one of the arguments which has told heavily in England against Home Rule."

Let me now ask the question, How has it worked? The Leader of the Opposition last year, upon faulty information supplied to him by a deputation, made a declaration in a speech outside the House to the effect that the county councils were not working well in Ireland, that they were not doing their business with capacity, and, in fact, that they were sacrificing the interests of those whom they represented. I am glad to have an opportunity, face to face with the right hon. Gentleman, of giving him the answer to that statement. The answer is very simple. The Local Government Board in Ireland, which supervises all the transactions of local government in the country, has in its Report year by year for every year that has passed since 1898, given the lie to that statement. I have all its Reports by me here; and they show year by year that the prediction of evil by those who did not trust the Irish people has been falsified, and that the business of the counties has been transacted honestly, economically, and efficiently. These Reports appeared year after year while the right hon. Gentleman was Prime Minister, and his Government was in office at Dublin Castle, and yet, without reading these Reports of his own Government, the right hon. Gentleman rashly last year committed himself to the statement to a deputation that the county councils of Ireland were working inefficiently and corruptly, and some, in fact, sacrificing the interests of the ratepayers. I have his words.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR (City of London): Did I say that?

MR. JOHN REDMOND: The right hon. Gentleman has known me long enough in this House to be aware that I am not likely to make a statement of that kind without being able to verify it. Here is the quotation from the speech of the right hon. Gentleman.

> "If the information you have given me is correct, and it is confirmed from all quarters with which I have had an opportunity of consulting, the Local Government Act is being used in every county in Ireland where the Nationalist Party have a majority, not to further the administrative necessities of that country, not to use the patronage vested in the majority for the purpose of appointing the best men to do the work they have to do; it is used merely as a great electoral machine for promoting the interests of a political party, even though the essential local interests of the community are fatally sacrificed thereby."

Well, now, I have given the first answer to that statement consisting of the Reports of the Local Government Board in Ireland year after year. The Report of the very year that speech was made, the Report of the right hon. Gentleman's own Board, says the direct opposite. Let me give another proof. When the Local Government Act came into operation great obstacles were placed in the way of its successful working. The county councils were obliged to pension all officials on high scales. They had to face a new rate for technical instruction under the Act of 1899, and to take up their work under great difficulty caused by inexperience and the tangled condition of local administration. Yet notwithstanding all that, and notwithstanding the fact that these county councils have set on foot and carried out great works in the shape of improvements of roads and other matters of that kind, taking Ireland as a whole, the rates have been reduced by these councils to the extent of 3d. in the £ all over Ireland. It is interesting to remember in this connection that the President of the Local Government Board in England stated in answer to a Question the other day that the rural rates in England have been raised in the same period 1s. in the £. Where the Irish people have got control of rates and expenditure, there has been this economy, this saving of public money, but in that portion of the expenditure in Ireland which is not under the control of the people, but under the control of this House, there has during the same period of eight years been an increase of £1,000,000. At one time it was nearer £2,000,000. I respectfully submit to the House in the face of these facts that the old argument that the Irish people are unfit for the steady and sober management of their own affairs goes by the board.

The second great argument was that if Ireland got Home Rule legislation would be passed by an Irish Parliament to confiscate the property of the Irish landlords. Again the Unionist Party have themselves removed that argument. We were told that an Irish Parliament would endeavour to put into an Act of Parliament the principles of Parnell and the Land League. What were those principles ? Those principles were the abolition of landlordism and the creation of a peasant proprietary. Those principles were enshrined in the Unionist Land Act of the right hon. Member for Dover. Whatever difficulties may have arisen in the working of the Act, and however Irish landlords may have received too high a price for their farms, the fact remains that your bogey of which you made so much use twenty years ago, that an Irish Parliament would rob Irish landlords, has been completely removed by the action of the Unionist Party by the passage of the Land Act of 1903. Let me take another of those bogeys—that of religious bigotry. The English people were told that if the Irish people got control of their own affairs that power would be used as an engine of religious bigotry. I have heard in this House complaints made of the working of the county councils as proof that that is likely to take place. I have actually heard men in this House declare, as a reproach against Ireland, that in practically entirely Catholic parts of the country the county councils have consisted, in the majority, of Catholics. It is absurd to raise an argument of that kind. Apply that argument to England, where the proportions are reversed. What would be said if I denounced the English nation as a religiously intolerant nation, because of the fact that although there are about 2,000,000 of Catholics in Great Britain, yet out of the 567 Members returned to this House, there are only five Catholics, and if I went on to confound them by saying that in Ireland, where the Protestants are in a small minority, out of 103 Members elected twenty-seven are Protestants, and that quite a number of them who sit as Members of this Party are elected to this House by almost entirely Catholic constituencies. I know what is in the mind—indeed more than in the mind—of the Leader of the Opposition, because he has expressed it. He takes the view that religion has influenced county councils in the giving of paid offices, and I state that that is untrue. I have here the figures for every county in Ireland, and they prove the exact opposite. They prove indeed that if there is intolerance at all it is not in the Catholic parts of the country. Allow me to give two or three instances only. In Galway the Protestants are only 6 per cent. of the whole population, but they hold 19 per cent. of all the paid offices in the gift of the county councils. In Cork the Protestants are 10 per cent. of the whole population, and they hold 23 per cent. of all the paid offices in the gift of the county councils, and some of the most highly paid ones. In Cavan the Protestants are only 20 per cent. of the population, and they hold 47 per cent. of the paid offices. In West Meath the Protestants are only 9 per cent., and they possess 33 per cent. of all the paid offices. If I turn to the other side of the picture, I find that in the northern portion of Ireland the story is the exact reverse. In Armagh the Catholics are 45 per cent. of the whole population, but they have only 6 per cent. of the paid offices. In Tyrone the Catholics have actually a majority of the population, but the county council for some reason or another has a majority of Unionists and Protestants. The Catholics are 55 per cent. of the population, but they only hold 20 per cent. of the offices. In Fermanagh the Catholics are 38 per cent. of the population, and they only hold 23 per cent. of the paid offices. Surely these figures are a fair argument for me to use, and a powerful one. Here we have been held up for twenty years, not only as a people incompetent, but as a people who, if they got powers, would be intolerant and oppressive to their Protestant fellow-countrymen. The Unionist Party passed the Local Government Act of 1898, and put powers into the hands of the people, and there is the result. If I wished to emphasise this further, I might perhaps be allowed to say that even quite recently an eminent Protestant divine, Dr. Meade, the present Bishop of Cloyne and Ross, speaking on a public occasion and proposing the health of the Lord-Lieutenant, used these words. He assured his Excellency that, although they might differ in their politics and views, and had perhaps the name of being very strong politicians, notwithstanding all that they lived together in peace and goodwill, and were all lovers of their country. Let me read the statement made by the Moderator of the General Assembly of Presbyterians. The Rev. Dr. McKean, speaking last June, said—

> "The grazing system was doing more injury not only to the Presbyterian Church, but to the whole of the Irish people, than any other condition of things he had seen. His objection to the ranches was that they were kept covered with bullocks and men could not be seen in his district. He hoped this land would be cultivated, but declared that what Presbyterians had to do was to keep the manhood of the country in Ireland. Dealing with the attitude of the southern Catholics towards Presbyterians he said that all ministers in the south with one or two exceptions were unanimous in speaking highly of the toleration and goodwill shown towards them by those who differed from them in faith."

I claim, therefore, that that argument, drawn from alleged religious bigotry, has been utterly destroyed by the experience of the last twenty years. Another argument which was used was the alleged absolute irreconcilability of the landlords, gentry, and professional classes—indeed, it might be held the whole of Ulster—on this question. The last twenty years have seen an extraordinary change going on in Ireland, and not the least remarkable change has been the change that has been going on in Ulster. Every man who reads the newspapers is aware of the fact that there has arisen in Ulster a new democratic body—the hon. Member for South Belfast will know what I mean—a new democratic force which, if it does not come directly and fully to Home Rule, has at any rate broken loose from the old official bearings, the old official moorings, and is every day gaining power and every day drifting into the direction of self-government by the Irish people. That force returned the hon. Member for West Belfast to this House; and that force, taking another form, returned the hon. Member for South Belfast. A change has even come over the old Orange Society which, twenty years ago, was united against us. In the Orange Society there are now two sections—one of them declaring itself in favour of the extension of self-government to the Irish people. Many people must have read a remarkable letter written to the papers the other day by the Grand Master of the Independent Order of Orangemen, Mr Lindsay Crawford, in which he said that—

> "The time had come for plain speaking on the part of all Ulster men who were interested in the settlement of the Irish questions, on lines that would devolve upon Irishmen within the bounds of Imperial unity the elementary right of self-government in Irish affairs."

That change with regard to Home Rule is going on in Ireland amongst all sections of the people; and I venture to hold that if you could take a ballot to-morrow of the business men in Ireland—who are really now beginning to understand that there never will be a real trade and industrial revival except under self-government in Ireland—if you were to take a ballot to-morrow you would find almost, if not quite, that the majority of them are in favour of Home Rule. The same is true of the professional classes; and the same is true of the official classes. I wish the Chief Secretary would throw all official reticence on one side and tell us candidly what is the official opinion in Ireland. I have a shrewd suspicion that the overwhelming majority of the officials would far sooner see Home Rule set up on a sound basis in Ireland than be subject to the uncertainties, difficulties, and miseries of the present system of government in that country. If you take the landlords: everybody knows the change that has come over many of them on this question. I know that until the land question is completely settled, and so long as we are in conflict with a large number of landlords on the question of price, compulsion, and so forth—until these questions are set at rest—and God grant that they soon will be very rapidly set at rest—you cannot expect that landlords as a class will declare in favour of Home Rule. But it is not remarkable that so many of them have. Take, for instance, the hon. Member for the County of Carlow, who was elected the other day, without opposition, in an almost entirely Catholic constituency: he himself is not only a Protestant, not only a landlord, but the son of the ablest leader of the Irish landlords, who sat in this House, and who will be remembered by many hon. Members present—Mr. Arthur MacMurragh Kavanagh. And finally let we ask what has become of the remaining great argument of the Unionists against Home Rule, viz., that they had an alternative policy of their own. Yes. Their alternative policy was twenty years of resolute Government. They have tried that policy out. They have had their twenty years. They tried it out under circumstances most advantageous to themselves, with the ablest Englishmen they could find administering in Ireland, with an overwhelming majority in this House. They have tried their policy, and what is the result? Why during the whole twenty years Ireland was never governed by the constitution of this country. She was governed all the time by exceptional and coercive laws. The twenty years resulted in the reduction of the population by about 1,000,000, in the increase of taxation by over £2,000,000, and so far from settling the Irish national question, Ireland admittedly—and we will hear it in the debate used with wonderful effrontery against us—is, if anything, more disloyal to the present system of government than she was before. No; every remedy has been tried, but they have never weaned Ireland, nor coerced Ireland, from the national movement. Politics are very uncertain in this country. No one can foretell the result of a general election. Any day there may be a landslide and one party may take the place of the other. The only thing sure about the politics of the three kingdoms is that at least eighty-five or eighty-six Irish representatives will be returned, time and time again, to this House, to declare as we are declaring with one voice this afternoon, that nothing can settle the Irish question except a full measure of Home Rule. You were to convert her from Home Rule by twenty years of resolute government But you have not converted Ireland from Home Rule; but you have, on the contrary, converted to Home Rule almost every man you ever sent there. It is interesting to look at the list of Viceroys from the days of Lord Kimberley, who, as the opponent of a self-governing Ireland, ruled Ireland at the time of the Fenian outbreak; Lord Spencer, who went as a Unionist to Ireland, and ruled Ireland during the worst days of 1880 and 1881, down all through the list: Lord Carnarvon, Lord Aberdeen, to Lord Crewe, and last but not least, Lord Dudley. What has been their experience? I do not say they were all absolutely converted to my conception of Home Rule, but they have every one of them declared their distrust and their distaste of the present system of government in Ireland. Then take your Under-Secretaries and other high officials in Ireland—Sir Robert Hamilton, Sir West Ridgway, Sir Redvers Buller. Why, it is the same story right through. The men sent to convert us from Home Rule we have converted into enemies, at least I may say, of the present position and system of rule in that country. I do not want to detain the House much longer, but I would like to read to the House the simple declaration of Sir West Ridgway—

> "I went to Ireland with an open mind, free from bias, and there were soon impressed upon it certain facts. I quickly realised that the system was deficient and cumbersome, and that the gulf which yawned between the people and the Government could only be bridged by associating the people with the government of their own affairs."

And he went on to say that he prepared a Memorandum in 1889, and submitted it to the Government, in which he advocated the concession of a liberal measure of self-government, the decentralisation of finance, and the reorganisation of Dublin Castle. Then he recommended—

> "Especially the abolition of that chaotic anachronism administered by semi-independent boards whereby three men do the work of one."

I commend to the House his accurate description of the noble Lord's Amendment. He said—

> "The policy of the extreme Unionist is purely negative. That policy is to stand still and do nothing. Ireland is to rest and be thankful while the rest of Europe progresses and develops. Ireland is to be stationary—to remain stagnant—and if in the course of nature unhealthy ferment follows it is to be corrected by antiseptic coercion."

That is a fair definition, I respectfully submit, of the meaning of the Amendment of the noble Lord.

Now, I ask, what argument against Home Rule remains? Honestly I know of only one, and that is an argument which, put nakedly, would revolt the feelings of every man in this House—I mean the argument of fear—fear of the injury that Ireland, with her 4,000,000, might be able to do to this nation of over 40,000,000 if the Irish people had placed in their hands some measure of self-government. Sir, that argument is unworthy a great nation. It is said that Ireland is disloyal. So was Canada in 1837. Do you recollect the fact that on the accession of Queen Victoria to the throne the Government in this country directed that the *Te Deum* should be sung in the churches in the Colony of Canada in honour of the occasion, and that the Canadians rose *en masse* and left the churches, and they were actually fighting against this country with arms in their hands at the moment of the accession of the Queen? It is said, "Ireland is disloyal"; so was General Botha until you conceded to him the right of self-government. It is said, "Ireland is disloyal"; so was Canada, so was Australia, and so was the Transvaal when you attempted to take away their rights of self-government from them. I was talking a few months ago in this House to a very distinguished Unionist Member of it, and I put this argument candidly to him: I pointed out the similarity of the two races, the two creeds, the disloyalty and the turmoil that faced Lord Durham when he went out to Canada. I also pointed out the result of self-government, and I asked this distinguished gentleman: "What is your answer?" He said that there was only one answer, and that was to be found in the proximity of Ireland to Great Britain. He said to me: "What would happen if after Home Rule a foreign foe succeeded in landing in Ireland, and was received by a friendly population?" I asked him what reception he thought a foreign foe would get if he succeeded in landing now. And I asked him further how would it be more easy for a foreign foe to land on the shores of Ireland after Home Rule, after the people had been trusted, and so forth? He could not answer, because he had to admit that the Navy would still be in existence, and still be under your control and not ours. You would have your forces to prevent the invasion of Ireland then just as you have them now, but you would have this stronger force than any military or naval armaments. You would have the contentment which would spring from the breasts of a people whose rights of self-government had been conceded. But, after all, are not these very unworthy arguments and considerations for a great nation? Last year the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs made a speech with reference to the cession of autonomy to the Transvaal which stuck in my memory, and which I have referred to on more than one occasion outside this House. He said—

> "The history of our relations with our self-governing Colonies has been a great chapter in the history of freedom. The first part of that chapter began when freedom and union were thought to be incompatible—to be in rivalry with each other. Freedom won the day. Now we knew that freedom and union were not only compatible, but that they were inseparable. Freedom gave to the self-governing Colonies power to develop their countries, and, what was more, improved the special excellencies of their race and character in the environment of the country in which they lived. That was a great gift—the power to develop—which freedom gave. But it had another gift, namely, that of healing. In the history of one of our great colonies we had already seen how it could heal wounds and strife, and bring races together, and we were confident in our latest self-governing Colony that the healing gift of freedom would be equally potent."

Yes, those are two of the great gifts of freedom, the power to develop and the power to heal. These are the gifts that we are asking for Ireland, the power to develop for ourselves, in our own way, our own qualities. The power to develop for ourselves the resources of our own country; the power to strike off the minds of the youths of Ireland the chains that are there to-day, to free their hands and to enable them to develop their own characters and the resources of their own country. Whenever Ireland had that power, Ireland prospered; when she lost that power, Ireland declined. During the history of Grattan's Parliament, Irish industries, which had been deliberately and ruthlessly destroyed by the action of the English Parliament, had begun to revive, and then to flourish, but from the moment that the Union was carried that development was arrested, stagnation and decay came down like a poisonous mist over the land, and to-day Ireland, which is by nature a rich and fertile island, lags miserably behind in the hindmost rank of the progress of the world. We ask from you power to develop, we ask also the power to heal. There are many wounds to be healed in Ireland, and it may be said that although the wounds inflicted by this country in the past have been many and grievous, yet probably the deadliest wounds have been those inflicted by race or class hatred, and the religious dissensions of Ireland's own sons themselves. My answer to that is that every class hatred in Ireland, every discord, every feud, has its origin in the past history of the government of Ireland by England. Give us the power to heal those feuds. Ireland herself alone can do it. So long as English ascendancy is associated with one creed in Ireland, with one class, and with one party, so long will the healing of these wounds be absolutely impossible. It was the same in Canada. But, in consequence of the enlightened statesmanship of Lord Durham and the statesmen of that day, the blessed influence of freedom came along and united warring races and creeds. So will it be in Ireland, and all we ask from you, all I ask in this Resolution, is this: That what you have done for Frenchmen in Quebec, what you have done for Dutchmen in the Transvaal, you should now do for Irishmen in Ireland. In other words, you should trust the people, and the moment you do it, I believe in my heart and conscience, there and then, once and for all, you will have ended the blackest chapter in the history of your country. I beg to move.

MR. RAINY (Kilmarnock Burghs) said he rose to second the Motion so admirably and eloquently moved by the hon. and learned Member for Waterford. Although he could have wished that someone more capable had been entrusted with the duty, he felt he had some justification for so doing. Ever since Parnell was put into Kilmainham he had been a convinced Home Ruler, and attaching the great importance that he did to this question, he thought it should not be associated with one form of religious belief, and he was glad to be able to stand up and support it as a Protestant and Presbyterian. It was not only an Irish, but an Imperial question also, and as such support should be given to it by those on that side of the House, who believed in the proposed solution plainly and emphatically. It was very difficult to follow the eloquent and exhaustive speech to which they had just listened, but during the brief interval he proposed to detain the House he desired to trace some points of the history of the time of King William III. in order that the House should have in mind some idea of things which were not always alluded to when this subject was discussed. After the Battle of the Boyne, when the Treaty of Limerick was broken by this country. the Irish Parliament was a Protestant body, yet, in spite of the exclusion of the Catholics from that body, the people of Ireland always tried to help those in Parliament who endeavoured to work for the emancipation of the Catholics. The whole efforts of Grattan and Flood became popular in Ireland, because the Protestant Parliament then stood for the nation as a whole, and endeavoured to obtain for those outside that which was granted to one creed. It was remarkable to note that as years went on, owing to the exclusion of the Catholics from the Parliament, almost every group of persons who endeavoured to ameliorate the condition of Ireland were Protestants. Emmett was a Protestant, Wolfe Tone was a Protestant, Lord Edward Fitzgerald was a Protestant. It was, therefore, of the utmost importance that the House should realise that it was not a question between one creed and another, as to what would satisfy the national aspirations on the other side of the Channel. It had unfortunately been the fact that everything that had been granted to Ireland had been spoilt in the giving. At the time of the Union it was understood that there should be Catholic emancipation, but that hope was disappointed. Let the House take O'Connell's emancipation campaign. It was only through Irishmen going so far as to threaten civil war, which the Ministers were not prepared to face, that that concession was obtained, and it was owing to his campaign for the repeal of the Union that the whole of the consequential legislation carried out by the British Parliament resulted. It was a curious fact that nothing had ever been given to Ireland at any moment because she was peaceful and entitled to it. What had been given had been given because there was unrest and disturbance. Even during the time of the late Government, a time when they were told there was to be resolute government in Ireland, the resolute government was accomplished by sops. It was not resolute government at all. It was shooting with rifles filled with breadcrumbs, and resulted in a shower of gold on the other side. If hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite were consistent and believed in their principles, if there was treachery and conspiracy going on to to upset the Empire, why had Irishmen a vote? Why were they allowed to send Members to Parliament, and why did the House regard with equanimity the fact that unless there was an extraordinary majority on the one side or the other, the destinies of the Empire rested neither with the Government nor with the hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite, but with the Irish Members? As evidence of the fact that nothing was done, save under compulsion, he would call attention to the fact that Mr. Gladstone himself stated in the House that his land legislation for Ireland would never have been taken in hand but for the disturbance in Ireland. He also believed the Leader of the Opposition would never have gone in for the Land Purchase Act if it had not been for the Plan of Campaign. It was on record in the "Life of Gladstone," by the Secretary of State for India, that as a matter of fact in the April, May, June, and July of that year the Leader of the Opposition was driven step by step finally to adopt a position which, in a speech in that year, he said was immoral, was robbery, and one which he would not tolerate for a moment, because it broke down contracts. Objections had been touched upon by the hon. and learned Member, but he would never forget the speeches that were made in Edinburgh at the time of the first Home Rule Bill by the late Lord Goschen and the late Duke of Devonshire. In addressing the electors of Scotland in connection with the Irish managing their own affairs Lord Goschen, then Mr. Goschen, said—

> "*What is an Irish affair?* What are the powers of the Irish Government under the proposals of the Government? One power has been given to them—to realise it to the full—they may change the whole of their criminal law. They may take it and pull it to pieces, not only for three-quarters of Ireland, but for Ulster if they choose. I am not going to say they will do so, but you give the Irish Legislature powers to suspend Habeas Corpus—to abolish it—to abolish the law of capital punishment, to reduce murder to manslaughter, to change the nature of every crime. That is one of the powers given to this new Parliament. Well, what would be the position as between the two countries? In what position, for example, are those who may come to plot against this country—in what position would they be if they were in Dublin, with an Irish Executive and an Irish Legislature? They may change the laws of crime. I do not say they are to change the laws, but we are bound to know what we are doing when we say the Irish manage their own affairs. I have spoken of criminal law. Let me say a word about the laws referring to property. Here is a question I should submit to the supporters of the Government. Would the reduction of interest on English and Scottish money invested in Ireland be an Irish affair or an English and Scottish affair?"

He rejoiced that we had moved a long way beyond speeches of that sort. It was in the knowledge of the House that matters in Ireland had greatly improved during the last twenty years. There was a desire on the part of the people on both sides of the Channel to come together. As to how far that desire had gone the people on this side were not so well informed as those who lived on the other. But he believed there was a desire on the part of the people of Ireland to draw together for the national good. It would be a deplorable thing if that were checked, and would, if discouraged, fill the people of Ireland with disappointment and dismay. He trusted that the decision of the House would show that they intended to apply to Ireland and the dissatisfaction there the same treatment that they had applied to all those parts of the Empire where similar dissatisfaction in past times had existed. It had been remarked that it was cowardice which had prevented them from going on in 1886, and he believed it was so. They knew that the Empire had not been established by timid processes, and they ought to go on without fear. The more liberally they gave Home Rule the more likely they were to receive the trust of the Irish people, and he hoped there would be nothing like putting too many safeguards on what they gave, as if they could not trust the people out of their sight. That was just the thing which, he believed, would spoil any experiment they might make in that direction. Ireland, fundamentally and by her national situation, was in association with and belonged to this great Empire; and it was because he believed that it was not a question of creed but of nationality and common sense, and that experience in the past had proved that action on such lines as he suggested had made for the strength and not the weakness of this great Empire, that he had the greatest pleasure in seconding the Motion.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the present system of Government in Ireland is in opposition to the will of the Irish people and gives them no voice in the management of their own affairs; that the system is consequently inefficient and extravagantly costly; that it does not enjoy the confidence of any section of the population; that it is productive of universal discontent and unrest, and is incapable of satisfactorily promoting the material and intellectual progress of the people; that the reform of Irish Government is a matter vital to the interests of Ireland and calculated greatly to promote the well-being of the people of Great Britain; and, in the opinion of this House, the solution of this problem can only be attained by giving to the Irish people the legislative and executive control of all purely Irish affairs."—(*Mr. John Redmond.*)

*EARL PERCY (Kensington, S.) in moving to leave out all after the word "That," in order to add the words, "inasmuch as the abandonment by the Imperial Parliament of its undivided responsibility, both for legislation and administration within the United Kingdom, would injure the prosperity of Ireland and imperil the security of Great Britain, this House is unalterably opposed to the creation of an Irish Parliament with a responsible executive," said: The Motion which has been moved by the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Waterford, with all that customary eloquence with which he knows so well how to make the worse cause appear the better, reminded the House that an identical Motion which he moved only a few years ago received the unanimous assent of the Liberal Party.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: Only the first part.

*EARL PERCY: The larger part. There is one sentence to which I will refer at greater length. If the object of the hon. and learned Gentleman were merely to satisfy himself of the doctrinal orthodoxy of his political friends, that would be a matter of domestic discipline with which we on these benches need not greatly concern ourselves. We know that whatever the views on the subject of Home Rule of hon. Gentlemen opposite may be, they are bound by their election pledges not to introduce a Home Rule Bill in the present Parliament; we know that they have staked their collective reputation on a policy of devolution, which now turns out to be the one policy which every section of opinion in Ireland is united in condemning. We know, also, that after declaring at the last general election, on every platform, that if they could only get a majority independent of the votes of hon. Gentlemen below the gangway, they would do what they thought best without reference to any other consideration. It only required a hostile vote from a Nationalist Convention in Dublin to make them run away from the Bill which they had just induced the House of Commons to read a first time with a majority of 300. We have the Chief Secretary constantly informing us that he knows he has no right to govern Ireland, or to be where he is; and the hon. Member for South Tyrone telling us as he did last Thursday that he feels the present situation to be both humiliating and degrading and yet neither of these Gentlemen is able to devise a better method of saving his dignity than by leaving the executive functions of Government largely in abeyance, and depriving the unfortunate persons who happen to live in that part of the United Kingdom of that measure of protection of life and property which we have hitherto supposed to be the birthright of every British citizen. If on the top of that really deplorable record they choose to remind the English people that, bad as their actions are, their principles are even worse, certainly it is not for us to grudge them any satisfaction they may derive from that voluntary act of public penance. But the Member for Waterford has another and a more practical object in view in submitting his Motion. When the Irish Devolution Bill was abandoned last year, the hon. and learned Gentleman made a speech in Dublin which was not couched in the diplomatic phraseology which, out of regard for the feelings of hon. Gentlemen opposite, he feels obliged to use in this House. The hon. and learned Member explained the failure of the Government by saying that it was formed before the last general election, and that had it been formed after the general election certain "Roseberyite" gentlemen, as he described them, would not have found places in the Government at all, or, if they had found places, "would have held their tongues on the subject of Home Rule." I think I am quoting the hon. and learned Gentleman almost textually. He then proceeded to say that the failure of the Devolution Bill had shown the Government that there was no practicable alternative except Home Rule. But that part of the speech I will give in his own words. The hon. and learned Gentleman said—

> "The fate of the Irish Council Bill has shown the Government the impossibility of satisfying Ireland with anything short of Home Rule, and has made this certain that Home Rule, not devolution, will be the Irish policy put before the electors at the next general election. My own estimate is that the general election will take place early in 1909 and in my opinion the sooner the general election comes the better. It is our duty to declare plainly to the Liberal Party that when the election comes Home Rule must be put in the forefront of their programme, and if it is allied with the question of the reform of the House of Lords, then probably all the better for Ireland. We must effect this duty next session, and place the Irish demand plainly before the House of Commons and the English people. If I am asked how and when we will raise it in Parliament, that depends on circumstances, and even if we knew, it would be very foolish to make the announcement six months in advance."

The cat is now out of the bag in the shape of this Motion. It is a piece of strategy skilfully designed to extract from His Majesty's Government, if possible, plain answers to two plain questions. The first is, Do they or do they not admit that devolution is henceforth an impracticable policy? and secondly, Do they or do they not intend to put Home Rule frankly in the forefront of their programme at the next general election, even if they prefer to conceal its prominent position under cover of an attack on the House of Lords? No one can deny that these are pertinent questions; they are questions which interest us and interest the whole country, as well as hon. Gentlemen below the gangway. The Government have produced their devolution scheme and it has failed. We have a right to know whether and to what extent their Irish policy has been modified in consequence. They have produced their scheme for reform of the House of Lords. We have a right to know, and the electors have a right to know, whether a Home Rule Bill is to be one of the Bills upon which the House of Lords is to be allowed to say "No" three times, and is then to become law in spite of the fact that the details of the Bill have never been submitted to the electors at all. The hon. and learned Gentleman was good enough to say of my Motion that it is plain and straightforward. Our position is perfectly clear. We have never regarded devolution as anything but a trick to induce the electors of this country to commit themselves to the principle of Home Rule by a side-wind. We agree with the hon. and learned Gentleman that nothing could be more disastrous to the interests of the whole of the United Kingdom than to keep this vital issue permanently in suspense, and he is quite right when he says that to Home Rule we remain, as we always have been, unalterably opposed. With regard to the Motion of the hon. and learned Gentleman, I hope he will not think me guilty of discourtesy if I say that it seems to me to consist partly of premises which are all more or less at variance with the facts, and partly of conclusions which have no relation at all to the premises. Really, to say of a system under which the Irish people have precisely the same control over local affairs as the English people have, and a considerably larger share of political representation in this House than the electors of any other part of the Kingdom—to say of such a system that it gives them no voice in the management of their own affairs must, I think, be admitted to be something in the nature of a terminological inexactitude. To say that it does not meet with the acceptance of any section of the Irish people when we know, as a matter of fact, that a quarter of the population, composed of the most wealthy—[An HON. MEMBER: And intelligent.]—I will not use an offensive phrase—the most wealthy part of the population, is not only content with the present state of things, but is desperately and determinedly opposed to the very solution which the hon. and learned Gentleman recommends—is scarcely less absurd. And when we are asked to declare that the present administration of Ireland is incapable of promoting the prosperity of the Irish people, it is quite sufficient to disprove that statement to refer to statistics which have been cited over and over again, and which are recognised tests of material prosperity in the case of every other country in the world except Ireland. The hon. and learned Member has mentioned again to-night the drain of the population by emigration. That is no doubt a sad and undeniable circumstance, but that it has nothing to do with the Union is conclusively proved by the fact that the population of Ireland steadily increased for forty years after the Act of Union. Emigration has set in during the last half century, but so it has also in England and Scotland. But whereas the tendency in Ireland shows some signs of arrest (I am told on very good authority that the number of Irish emigrants from Ireland in 1905 was less than it has been in any year since 1851), the number of emigrants from Scotland is greater now than that from Ireland. And in the case of England I believe the emigration is larger this year than it has ever been. Of course, it is true that Ireland, being to a greater extent than England dependent upon agriculture, has suffered to a greater extent than we have from the effects of free trade. That is obvious. But Home Rule has never been advocated, by the Liberal Party at least, on the ground that it would enable Ireland to revert to protection. On the contrary, every single Home Rule Bill they have yet brought in has been careful to reserve the control of the Customs Tariff to the Imperial Parliament. As to the inefficiency of the administration the hon. and learned Gentleman passed it over with very few words. He said very naturally that the subject had been thoroughly thrashed out last Thursday, and he would not deal with it at any length. But we have the testimony of the Prime Minister himself in the debate on the Address last year, and I think of the Chief Secretary, to the effect that it would be impossible to find abler administrators than those who sit in Dublin Castle now, and if it is true that that administration is costly, the fact is partly due to the number of inspectors appointed in connection with the numerous Acts which this House has passed in order to satisfy Irish ideas, but mainly due to the expense of the police. The cost of the police in Ireland is not comparable to the cost of the police in England, because the police in Ireland have to perform a number of duties which are not thrown on that force in this country, and in any case the very last persons who have a right to complain of the cost of the police are hon. Gentlemen below the gangway, whose language and constant incitement to agitation of every kind is one of the factors chiefly responsible for the swollen Estimates under this head, which the Government themselves have had to present to the House. But I am quite aware that there are many hon. Gentlemen on both sides of the House who are far more competent and better-qualified than I am to speak about the effects of Home Rule from the Irish point of view, and, so far as that part of the Motion is concerned, I shall content myself by pointing out that even if we were triumphantly to refute to the hon. Gentleman's own satisfaction every one of his premises, that would not in the least degree affect his belief in the conclusion which he draws. He has over and over again told us in this House and elsewhere that he founds the claim of Ireland to Home Rule upon the rights of nationality, and although he lays great stress here upon the poverty and backwardness of the Irish people, we know that in Ireland he has offered a determined opposition to the efforts of Sir Horace Plunkett and the Agricultural Organisation Society, on the avowed ground that the success of those efforts would hamper the realisation of the aims of the Nationalist Party. And in the speech which he made only last year at the Mansion House, he said as follows—

> "You do not need to be reminded how much has been done already, especially in the last twenty-five years"—

which covers the whole period during which the Unionist Government have been in office—

> "to mitigate the sufferings of Ireland on the question of the land, of the labourers, and even on the question of education, but the doctrine we hold is that the demand for national self-government is founded upon right, and we declare that no ameliorative reforms, no number of Land Acts, Labourers Acts, and Education Acts, no redress of financial grievances, no material improvements or industrial development can satisfy Ireland until Irish laws are administered on Irish soil by Irishmen."

Obviously the real argument that we have to meet is not that Ireland has been badly treated by Great Britain in the past, but the argument of nationality and nationality alone. Upon that point the first observation I would like to make is that never in the whole history of the British Empire have we granted self-government or Parliamentary institutions in response to the claim of nationality. We have given Parliamentary government to the Colonies not on the ground that they were distinct national entities, but simply and solely on the ground that that was the most convenient and indeed the only practical way of managing the internal affairs of communities which are at such a distance from us that they cannot be effectively represented as Ireland is in the Imperial Parliament. The hon. and learned Gentleman cites the case of Canada. The question in the case of Canada was not whether we should give Canada a Parliament or not. She already had two. The question in Lord Durham's time was whether the Canadian Parliament should or should not have complete control of its own executive, and it was precisely the attempt to govern Canada by means of a Parliament of its own while we retained control of its executive, that led to the Canadian rebellion. The second observation I have to make is that if we are to found Home Rule on the claim of nationality we shall have to recognise the obvious fact that Ireland is not one nation, but two, nations moreover sharply divided in race, in religion, and in politics. If homogeneity of population is a test of nationality, then the claim either of Scotland or of Wales to a Parliament of its own is far greater than the claim of Ireland, and the Irish claim, if it is to be admitted at all, is a claim not to one Parliament but to two. There is not a single argument which can be brought forward to justify the creation of a Nationalist Parliament in Dublin which cannot be brought forward to justify the simultaneous creation of a Unionist Parliament in Belfast. Does anyone in any part of this House seriously suggest that that would be a solution which would be a benefit either to Ireland as a whole or to that Nationalist portion of Ireland, which being the poorest would be thrown back entirely upon its own resources? The great curse in Ireland as it is which we all deplore—and we do not want to do anything to accentuate it—is this division between classes and races and religions which renders it impossible for them to combine together to promote the material development of their country, and makes it absolutely certain that any administrative authority which is devolved by this House will be used by the majority on one side or the other for the purpose of affixing a stigma upon the minority. Look what has happened in the case of the Local Government Act. The hon. and learned Gentleman talked about the efficiency of the local authorities. I am not going to dispute that assertion. But when the Irish Local Government Act was passing through the House I remember how the hon. and learned Gentleman himself got up and told us of the admirable work which the county gentlemen, Loyalists and Protestants, had done in every part of Ireland on the old grand juries, and he pledged the good faith of himself and his colleagues collectively that they would do everything in their power to give the Act a fair chance, and to see that no man should be excluded from those councils on the ground of politics or of religion. In 1902 the hon. Member for East Mayo speaking at Newtown Butler advised the electors in so many words not to vote for any candidate who was not a member of the United Irish League. In twenty-seven counties the councils were swept almost bare of Unionist representation altogether, and the hon. Member for Waterford went to Cork and boasted of the fact that "the county and district councils of Ireland formed a network of Nationalist organisation throughout the length and breadth of the country." I do not mention that for the purpose of casting a stone at the Nationalist county councils. The hon. and learned Gentlemen said the Unionist county councils in the North are just as bad. It may be so, but does not that add to the force of my argument? Does it not show the absolute folly of introducing into a country in which you cannot now get men of different religions and politics to work together even for the purposes of local government, a system which must mean either a permanent segregation of North and South into watertight compartments under separate legislative and administrative systems, or else the permanent subjection of a population numbering 1,250,000 to a racial and religious supremacy which they abhor. The third observation I would make on the point of nationality is that if it is a good argument for giving Home Rule it is an equally good argument for granting separation. The hon. and learned Gentleman was very careful not to repudiate the idea of separation. Does he repudiate it now?

MR. JOHN REDMOND: I ask the noble Lord to be kind enough to ask a more definite question. I repudiate nothing I have ever said in public, here or elsewhere. I never said anything more emphatically and strongly elsewhere than I have stated on the floor of this House.

*EARL PERCY: I do not in the least quarrel with that statement. But here is a speech made by the hon. Member for East Tyrone, who moved the Motion last Thursday. It is quoted from the *New York Irish World*—

"The message we bear"—

—that is to America—

"is from that illustrious leader of our Party, John Redmond. If there is any man in this audience who says to us, as representing that Parliamentary movement: 'I do not believe in your Parliamentary ideas. I do not accept Home Rule. I go beyond it, I believe in an independent Irish nation'—if any man says this, I say: 'We do not disbelieve in it.' These are our tactics. If you are to take a fortress first take the outer works. We believe that no man has a right to set limits to the aspirations of a nation, and no man has a right to say: 'Thus far shalt thou go, and no farther.'"

These are the views of hon. Gentlemen below the gangway, and of those upon whose votes they depend. We know what has been the result of Home Rule wherever it has been based upon national claims as in the case of Sweden and Norway, so often quoted as a parallel to our own, and as the separation of the United Kingdom is not an Irish question any longer, but a question of vital concern to Great Britain herself, and to the Empire as a whole, I propose with the leave of the House to devote the few remaining remarks I have to make to that concluding part of this Motion, about which the hon. Gentleman said practically nothing, which asks us to affirm that Home Rule would greatly promote the well-being of the people of Great Britain. What is the advantage which Great Britain—after all, not an insignificant part of the United Kingdom—is to derive from Home Rule? The commonest inducement held out to us, I think by the hon. Gentleman himself, is that if we gave Home Rule we should at length be masters in our own house, that we should relieve the congestion of business, and have more time to attend to questions of Imperial and domestic interest. Most people who use that argument are really thinking either of some devolution of administrative responsibility, in connection with local government, or else they are thinking of the adaptation to Ireland of some scheme of private Bill legislation like that which has been adopted in the case of Scotland. The hon. and learned Member for Waterford said that if my Amendment were accepted it would make the devolution of Private Bill legislation to Ireland impossible, but it would do nothing of the kind. We have given local government to Ireland as to Great Britain, and we are always devolving fresh powers upon local bodies, but over the exercise of every power which we devolve we retain the absolute and effective control, in the last resort, of the Imperial Parliament. In the case of local government there is control by the auditor of the Local Government Board, and how necessary that control is in the case of Ireland we saw, not long ago, in the action of the Mullingar Board of Guardians, where there were two applicants for a particular contract, one in the name of Ross for £11 and the other, Daly, £13, the latter being accepted. The Local Government Board asked for an explanation. [A NATIONALIST MEMBER: What about Poplar?] The Local Government Board does exercise control in Poplar, and under the present system there is no difference in that respect between the two countries. The Mullingar Board of Guardians informed the Local Government Board that the reason why they had given the contract to Daly was that he was a member of the United Irish League and Ross was not. Precisely the same principle applies to Private Bill legislation. Private Bill legislation does not withdraw Private Bills from the cognisance and control of this House. It merely provides a machinery for enquiry less expensive than that which takes place before Private Bill Committees. There is no difficulty whatever in giving Ireland some system of that kind except the difficulty of finding a tribunal which will command the confidence of all Irish Members. We all know very well that that will not satisfy hon. Gentlemen below the gangway. They have told us that what they object to is any control whatever being retained by the Imperial Parliament over powers which they delegate to Ireland. Let there be no mistake about this point, because it is important. The hon. and learned Member for Waterford last year said in the Queen's Hall—

> "If the Government propose to hand over to Ireland the control of any department in the government of Ireland, they must hand over that control wholly and abolutely. Our demand is for full control, legislative and administrative, over all Irish affairs."

Those who contend that the creation of an Irish Parliament and an executive responsible to it will save the time of this House are bound to tell us what is the practical plan which they propose. Are the Irish Members to be retained in this House? If so, are they to vote upon all questions or only upon Irish questions? If only upon Irish, how is it proposed to distinguish between those questions, and in the case of a conflict, how do you propose to secure that the decision of the Imperial Parliament shall prevail? When you have settled these details you will find yourselves confronted with the old dilemma. If you keep the Irish Members here, in the case of every Bill which comes before the Irish Parliament you will have to decide whether that is a question with which the Irish Parliament is competent to deal; you will have to decide whether upon this or that measure Irish Members should be allowed to vote here, and whether the veto of the Lord-Lieutenant has been properly or improperly exercised. It is clear that all those questions would provide fruitful and recurring topics of controversy, and the fate of Governments in this House will depend not upon the fidelity with which they have discharged their duty to the Britsh elector, but upon their attitude to Irish Members and the claims of the Irish Parliament. If the Irish Members are excluded from this House of Commons, then the attempt by a Parliament here in which Ireland is not represented to control a Parliament there in which we are not represented would be to repeat in a slightly different form the same experiment as that which lost us our American colonies. So far from relieving congestion in the House of Commons we should find ourselves in a far worse position. The amount of time now occupied in discussing Irish affairs has been greatly exaggerated, and, after all, the legislative output of the House of Commons is far greater than the output of any Continental Assembly. If it be true that we have not sufficient time adequately to discuss the Estimates, Imperial questions, and questions of social reform, it is not Ireland that

Earl Percy.

blocks the way, but the inveterate habit of both parties of devoting the maximum of the time at their disposal to those measures which command the minimum of agreement. Until we seriously set ourselves to reform this habit I feel quite certain that the electors will not accept the plea of overwork as a sufficient excuse for repudiating any one of our Imperial responsibilities. If Home Rule will not save our time, will it save our pockets? I do not think that that contention has been put forward by anybody. The Irish Members contend that it will enable them to effect certain economies, although the money saved in one direction will be spent in another. I do not think that anybody contends that the money so saved would go into the pockets of the British taxpayer. We have had a warning of what is in store for us in the Irish Council Bill, where the handing over the control of only eight departments to an Irish Government was estimated to cost £650,000 extra, and even then we were told by the hon. Member for the Scotland Division of Liverpool that Ireland would be starting self-government as a bankrupt concern. Whatever else is in doubt it is certain that under Home Rule we shall have to pay a great deal more than we do now; we shall lose all control over its expenditure and the only effective security for the advances of some £150.000,000 under the Irish Land Act namely, the power in case of default of resuming possession of the soil. I do not know whether I shall be accused of imputing dishonesty to the Irish peasantry, but hon. Gentlemen below the gangway have taught us that actions which are considered dishonest and criminal in England are to be palliated and condoned in Ireland on the ground that they are consonant with Irish ideas. Every argument which has been used to justify the non-payment of rent to a private landlord will be equally valid to justify the non-payment of rent to the State which has now stepped into the position hitherto occupied by the private owner. According to the hon. and learned Member for Waterford England has robbed Ireland of no less a sum than £2,000,000 a year ever since 1853 owing to the re-arrangement of the income-tax and the liquor duties in that year.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND: That is not my statement at all. It is the statement of the Royal Commission.

***Earl PERCY**: At any rate the statement is endorsed by the hon. and learned Gentleman. Every tenant under a Home Rule system who refuses to pay his rent will be held up to admiration as a martyr who is standing up for the national right to a recovery of its stolen goods, while the tenant who tries to meet his obligations will be denounced as a traitor and exposed to all the machinery of boycotting and outrage without even that meagre amount of police protection which the Chief Secretary feels he can still provide without doing violence to his political consistency. If Home Rule does not save time or money, how is it going to promote the well-being of England? There remains only the argument of sentiment: "Trust the Irish people and you will be rewarded with their enthusiastic loyalty." Judicial separation which is ordinarily regarded as at best a regrettable remedy for the evils of matrimony, is in the case of Ireland to be the means of affecting a "Union of hearts." That is the language used in England and on English platforms, but in Ireland legal separation is advocated as the prelude to divorce and to the realisation of Mr. Parnell's ambition to "sever the last link which binds Ireland to England." It is hardly surprising if, under these circumstances, we prefer to incur the slight inconvenience which arises from incompatibility of temper to running the certain risks which we should incur if we allowed our partner to set up business on her own account, and contract possibly a new alliance at our own lodge-gates with any enterprising neighbour who happened to have an eye to our plate and jewellery. The truth is that the situation of Ireland within twelve miles of these shores is a dominating factor in the consideration of this question of Home Rule. Let us assume for argument's sake, that Ireland is the most loyal part of the whole British Empire. Does anyone really suppose that if Australia or Canada occupied the same position of proximity that Ireland does we should have given them the same measure of self-government that they have now?

Mr. JOHN REDMOND: Certainly you would.

***Earl PERCY:** Certainly we should not, nor does the Liberal Party believe we should. Lord Crewe in 1902 said at Whitchurch:—

> "He would never be a party to a proposition which placed Ireland in a position of practical independence such as that possessed by New Zealand. The circumstances of the two places were entirely different in a large number of respects. Sooner than that he would see Ireland deprived of its Praliamentary representation and governed as a Crown Colony."

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.): We would rather be a Crown Colony than be here.

***Earl PERCY:** The President of the Board of Trade went to Belfast last year and told the people there that separation is unthinkable. Why is it unthinkable? If the Union Jack is not, as most of us regard it, the symbol of a fact in nature, but, as the Chief Secretary described it last week, the symbol of a political transaction, why is the separation of Ireland from Great Britain unthinkable? It is not unthinkable in the case of the Colonies, it happened in the case of the United States, it was advocated by Cobden as a positive benefit to this country and, however disastrous from other points of view no one will pretend that the separation of Canada or Australia would involve any strategic risk to the security of this country. That is not the case with Ireland. After all, in these matters it is absurd for people who are not naval or military experts to rely on their own opinions. We have the testimony on this subject of no less an authority than Captain Mahan who has insisted in the strongest terms on the danger we should incur by conceding to Ireland the Parliament which the hon. and learned Gentleman desires. And when we remember, what actually happened at the time of the Irish Rebellion, when we recall the statement of hon. Gentlemen below the gangway that the hour of England's danger will be the hour of Ireland's opportunity, when we remember the declaration of the hon. and learned Gentleman two years ago, that if he believed armed rebellion would be successful, he would advise it now, is not the very fact that he believes that under present conditions it would not be successful the best argument from our point of view for preserving those conditions intact? The hon. and learned Gentleman has at least achieved one object, whatever may be the attitude of hon. Gentlemen opposite. By bringing forward this Resolution, he has shown at all events, that Home Rule is still a living issue, and that it is not a "bogey." I agree with him. If any proof were needed to demonstrate the vitality of Home Rule, we should find it in the fact that it has managed to survive its connection with the Liberal Party. It is now a quarter of a century or more since that Party joined hands politically with the men whom they had denounced as marching through rapine to the disintegration of the British Empire, and announced their intention of giving to Ireland a form of government which would do justice to its national aspirations and afford free scope for the national energy. How have they redeemed that promise? Twenty-two years ago they offered Ireland something less than the *status* of a British self-governing colony. Last year they offered her the *status* of an Indian province. They make rapid converts but very poor missionaries. If faith is shown by works their faith seems to be governed by the law of diminishing returns, and yet I have no doubt the hon. and learned Gentleman will be perfectly satisfied if hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite, again to-night, do obeisance and homage to an abstract Resolution, on which afterwards they will be free to place any interpretation they please. And twenty-five years hence, we, or our successors, will be sitting here while the Leader of the Irish Party will get up in his place to state the irreducible minimum of Ireland's demands and to explain how utterly impossible is the latest Liberal proposal to govern Ireland as a British Protectorate with a Resident Commissioner. [A Nationalist Member: We will carry Home Rule before then.] I do not think so. Home Rule may be a living issue, but it is a losing cause, not merely because its own advocates are growing lukewarm and faint-hearted, but on account of the growing enthusiasm of the British people for an ideal which is the very antithesis of that enshrined in the Motion on the Paper. While hon. Gentlemen from Ireland are asking us to accept a policy founded on the assumption of a necessary antagonism between the interests of the nearest and closest of neighbours, the Colonies are asking us to recognise that even distance itself no longer offers an insuperable barrier to the creation of a corporate union between the heart and the members of the Empire closer and more tangible than has ever existed before. Who can doubt which of these ideals is the more likely to fire the imagination and the enthusiasm of the British people, which of these alternatives in days when success in war and commerce alike depends more and more on concentration and union, is most likely to secure that when the struggle comes—

" In the last great fight of all,
Our house may stand together and its pillars
may not fall."

Amendment proposed—

" To leave out all the words after the word 'That' in line 1, and to insert the words 'inasmuch as the abandonment by the Imperial Parliament of its undivided responsibility, both for legislation and administration within the United Kingdom, would injure the prosperity of Ireland and imperil the security of Great Britain, this House is unalterably opposed to the creation of an Irish Parliament with a responsible executive.' "—(*Earl Percy.*)

Question proposed, " That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. BIRRELL, Bristol, N.): The noble Lord in the course of his very interesting speech, which certainly had a most eloquent ending, made a remark which, I think, is calculated to startle even the comparatively uninitiated mind. He referred to the Act of Union as a fact in nature, and on my having alluded to it the other day by the more prosaic, but more correct title of a political transaction. I would remind him that his fact in nature, as it had its origin in the year 1801, could hardly claim so proud or ancient a title. After all, the problem we are discussing, involving as it does a Parliament in Ireland, is not a new problem, for Ireland once had a Parliament of her own; and I do not think anybody acquainted with its history need be ashamed of it. The noble Lord who never stands in need of language strong enough to express the depths of his conviction, and sometimes the intensity of his personal dislikes—[OPPOSITION cries of "No."]—I mean political dislikes. I do not wish in any way to attribute to the noble Lord personal dislikes to Ireland or to Irishmen. But, at all events, he takes his stand upon this fact in nature. He would have us believe that the Party with which he is now honourably connected regards the Union as immutably fundamental—a written constitution almost impervious to time. He has, indeed, suggested that in the matter of Private Bill legislation, it might be capable of some amendment; but that is the farthest he is prepared to go, and when he came to that part of the subject which evidently is most near to his heart—namely, the well-being of England, he made it pretty plain that Ireland, being necessary for England's safety, if she does not like it she must lump it. The bargain was struck a hundred years ago, when his fact in nature made its appearance. But he knows as well as I do, being a well-read and studious man, that it was engendered in a pit of corruption. He has "Lord Castlereagh's Correspondence" on his library shelves; and no doubt he has carefully read it. But England has forgotten all about that—it took place more than 100 years ago—and what England has forgotten Ireland has no right to remember. I hope that everybody will take note of the fierce spirit of determination which rang through the whole of the noble Lord's speech. He stands for the Act of Union without any substantial amendment. I hope I may assume that he, at all events, will never at any time be a party to any reduction in the numbers of the Irish Parliamentary representatives. If a people sell their country and their Parliament they are entitled, at all events, to go on receiving the price; and while, no doubt, a good deal of money was paid down on the nail, the chief part of the consideration for that political transaction was a continuing consideration, to be paid year after year by Parliament after Parliament, in the number of Irish Members who were to be sent across the stormy channel to represent their country in this House. But I am not sure that I am safe in that assumption. Indeed, I do not feel at all safe in any assumption which is based on the immutability of the Act of Union. The noble Lord has an autocratic temper. [Cries of "Oh."] I only wish I were an autocrat myself. But although we may have, or would like to have, an autocratic temper, autocrats we can never be. The noble Lord must have associates. He cannot work his will alone; he must have political companions; and, in these days, it takes all sorts to make a Cabinet. [Laughter and cheers.] I am glad to hear from the future Members of a future Cabinet that they are entirely of that opinion. I make no pretence of being a political Nestor; but I have seen some strange things in my time since the day in 1885 I hoisted the black flag of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham in a division of my native city of Liverpool.

Nothing is more noticeable in our Party politics—a strange and eventful history in the past, which seems likely to be a still more strange and eventful, but, I do not believe, a more honourable, history in the future—than the pressure of single ideas. I remember Mr. Gladstone's pamphlet, *The History of an Idea.* His idea was Home Rule for Ireland. Hon. Gentlemen opposite, as is evidenced by the noble Lord's peroration, are very busy writing the history of another new idea—Tariff Reform. We are all agreed about this, that it is an imperious idea, some think an Imperial idea, but at all events it is a very jealous idea, and a very bustling idea, which has already brought some very strange people together and made them love one another with a love almost passing the love of woman. Only the other day the right hon. Member for Wimbledon described the right hon. Member for West Birmingham—whom he has described in other days in other terms—as the greatest of living statesmen. The reason why he thinks that—a perfectly honest and legitimate reason—is because he and the right hon. Gentleman share together, passionately and eagerly, what I admit is a great idea. What has Ireland's share been in this great idea? The sale of Cobden's spectacles in Ireland has never been very great; Ireland, if we are to believe Irishmen, and sometimes we do, has been twice ruined, ruined by protection in the eighteenth century, and well nigh ruined by Free Trade in the nineteenth century. The Colonial Premiers when they came over here the other day were received by all Parties with the utmost cordiality. Gentlemen opposite admired them enormously, even perhaps more than I did, they admired their oratory, their political wisdom, their financial insight. But they were not the only people who treated the Colonial Premiers with courtesy and kindness, or who interchanged ideas with them. The only time I had the pleasure of meeting any number of these gentlemen was at an Irish banquet. I found them hobnobbing with extraordinary friendship and good feeling with representatives from Ireland, in fact they none of them made any disguise about it that they were all Home Rulers together. I am only suggesting that here is a dominant idea which may bind all the world together. Paris was worth a mass to Henry IV.; perhaps seventy or eighty votes on the floor of this House may some day be worth some modification of our system. Notwithstanding all the speeches that may be made to-night or any other night, in this House or in the country, there is no man in this House who does not know perfectly well at the bottom of his mind that sooner or later, by one Party or the other, there will be, and there must be, very substantial modifications made in our relations with Ireland and in our form of governing that country. It must come. The noble Lord, of course, is a Party man, and made a Party speech, and naturally he referred to what he called the Devolution Bill—the Irish Council Bill. I admit that sometimes there has been what might be called a conspiracy of silence about that Bill. I have not joined that conspiracy of silence, though, being a very modest man, it is no part of my business, having been acco-ciated with its introduction and its failure to go about the country calling attention to its merits. Let the dead bury its dead. All I can say is I am not ashamed of that measure, and I do not think the Government have any cause to be ashamed of it in any way. I think it would have been a very good thing if that measure had received fuller, freer, and fairer discussion in the City of Dublin, whatever judgment the Irish people had ultimately passed upon it. I quite agree that that measure was not, and was never intended to be, a substitute in any way for Home Rule. It was sometimes said to be a halfway house to Home Rule; well, it might have proved so. If there is going to be Home Rule some day, everything you do will contribute to Home Rule. If there is not going to be Home Rule a substituted mode of government will tell against it. It was not in any sense Home Rule, but it would have handed over to the Irish people an important measure of control in all the four or five chief departments of the State. The great regret I have now in looking back—it was an exception to the general rule—to the speech I made in introducing that measure is that I should have been led astray, by reading, to enumerate a great number of perfectly trumpery Boards which exist in Dublin—about which far too much fuss has been made, for they will be found existing in other places besides Dublin—and did not concentrate myself more than I did on the fact that the Bill would have handed over to Irishmen the administration of the four or five main things which sensible men would desire to administer. I have enjoyed this opportunity of making a better speech on behalf of that Bill than I did when I introduced it, and pass from that subject, which, I quite agree, in no way affects the relative position of Ireland towards Home Rule, or the Liberal Party towards Home Rule. I desire to impress on the House that, apart altogether, from nationality, national feeling, pride, emotion, and past history, which nobody but a fool ever overlooks, I find this question staring me in the face, that there is no time in this House to do the things which Ireland imperatively needs, which it is admitted that she needs, and which she must receive unless misfortunes and miseries are to dog her path, and unless her final connection with this country is to be our everlasting shame. We all know that there is a great congestion in this House, that England and Scotland have to be put off, but I say Ireland cannot afford to be put off. She cannot afford to have her education delayed, or her local government left unreformed in its present state. There are constant, steady, and innumerable reforms necessary. There is the land question. It is characteristic of Englishmen to believe that when they have introduced now and again, under the pressure of circumstances, a concession to Ireland, as in 1903, they can say farewell to Ireland. There is the noble Lord; a better informed man in many respects you will not find; he knows all about Turkey and the East. But I venture to say he knows very little about the present state of the land question in Ireland. And yet those who are compelled to consider this question know that at this very moment the land question in Ireland is perhaps as serious as it ever was before. The financial system on which the land money is forthcoming has broken down. A document has been lodged on the Table of the House; it suggests certain courses and substantial alterations which will be necessary if this land purchase system is not completely to break down. The Estate Commissioners' office is completely blocked; the Congested Districts Board is without funds to do the work of the relief of congestion to which this House stands pledged both in honour and money. All these things require constant Parliamentary attention day by day, week by week, and month by month. What is the good of a Chief Secretary thinking about these things? He may think about them till his hair turns grey—it turns grey, really, in the ordinary course of time, and not in consequence of any official cares and duties. He may think till his head aches, but he cannot get the time in this House. Hon. Members from Ulster know that as well as hon. Members below the gangway. There are scores of measures which are really vitally necessary unless you are going to have something like hell in Ireland—[OPPOSITION cries of "Oh, oh!"]—from this land question, which requires immediate and constant attention. I am not speaking of crime and murder, I am speaking of profound dissatisfaction and misery, I am speaking of the dislocation of society. Do hon. Gentlemen think they need only fling such an Act as that of 1903 to Ireland, and tell the peasants all over Ireland that the money is forthcoming to buy all the lands by which they are surrounded? The peasants do not perhaps scan very closely the Act, which not even my right hon. friend the Attorney-General fully understands; they believe, and are entitled to believe, in consequence of the statements in this House, that it was the intention of Parliament to supply money speedily so that landlordism might be abolished and peasant proprietorship established in its place both in pastoral and agricultural land. That is their belief; they are, if you like, excitable, and on this question of land have strange views of their own. But I am persuaded that if you introduced such land legislation into East Anglia you would have far worse troubles and excitement than ever you have among these people. [OPPOSITION Cries of "Oh!"] I am surprised that anyone should contradict it, except those who think that the peasants of Ireland are worse than those of any other country. What is wanted is time, which is not an article of manufacture. Such legislation as you introduce is excellent if you only have the courage to pursue it, and carry it out properly. It may be necessary to amend it. It is of no use expecting this Imperial Chamber to devote the weeks, months, and years necessary to secure what is required to do the work of Ireland. Time presses, and what is the good of the noble Lord trying to pin us with some dilemma or other? The fortunes of Ireland are not to be destroyed by a dilemma. Some way out of it has to be found, if only people are well disposed. I should not have done right if I had not taken this opportunity of expressing my own belief that some substantial modification is absolutely necessary, which will transfer to Ireland and to the Irish people the constant, steady, day-by-day, and year-by-year attention to their own affairs, unless you wish to see a state of things in Ireland which we should all deplore. That is the view which presents itself in the most forcible way to my mind; and there is really nothing surprising in the demand that Irish affairs should have constant, steady attention in a Parliament doing nothing else. The hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Waterford desired me to say what the opinion of the officials in Ireland would be. Well, I decline. Officials in Ireland, like officials elsewhere, take their colour from those with whom they are associated. If you ask me what businesslike people in Ireland are thinking about, our officials are businesslike men, and if you ask me what they are thinking about, not as officials but as businesslike men, my own belief is that the great bulk of business men in Ireland are searching for and thinking of some means of developing the resources of their country, and of preventing it from sinking into a state of decay. Well, you will not do much of that thinking on the floor of this House. [Cries of "Why?"] You will not get the time. You can only get the time in one session for one big contested subject and after that it is forgotten and everything falls behind. We have excellent non-controversial Bills before us which have no chance of passing, and under a Conservative Government we were in precisely the same position. I am not going into the question of the Local Government Act of 1898. I sometimes feel I should like to know—I know I never shall—what is the real feeling of gentlemen opposite about that Act. Are they glad they passed it, or are they sorry? I should be very glad to have a straightforward answer to that question. At a time when I knew little about Ireland, there seemed to me to be a good deal of sense in what was said by Lord Salisbury and Lord Hartington, that at a time when there was a state of profound political discontent in Ireland it was a little dangerous to give them local government before you had attempted to solve the greater and more important difficulty. That was the view held by two very distinguished men. However, they altered their views, or their views were put on one side by the pressure of events, and the Local Government Act was passed; and we have constantly heard from Unionist platforms the remark that it has been a failure. I have, of course, had some experience of it as

President of the Local Government Board, and in my judgment it has, perhaps with the exception of a single county, worked extremely well and economically. And when you ask about religious preferences, I must say the figures quoted by the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite, which I know to be perfectly accurate, dispose of that suggestion as completely as it can be disposed of. If you ask me whether contracts in Ireland are always considered on their merits, whether the personal element never enters into them—of course it does. We have our own state of things here at home. I know of nothing in Ireland to equal revelations made in municipal affairs in this country. Allowing for personal preference and for other influences which work in all bodies, Irish contracts have been well administered and Irish business has been marvellously well done by men who—one would have thought until these heavy duties were imposed upon them—had very little fitness or experience for it. But it was a stupendous experiment for a responsible Government to entrust this difficult and elaborate work to a class of persons who had never had any experience of the kind before, and the great bulk of whom, it was known, were animated by very strong national feelings and very strong political prejudices. I say they have done their work well, and that great and rash experiment, as I think it was, as rash experiments sometimes are, has been justified by results. Of course the Liberal Party is a Home Rule Party. There can be no sort of doubt about that. [Ironical OPPOSITION cheers.] I say it is a Home Rule Party. At the last election a number of persons, including myself, gave what amounted to a substantial promise. Although I was anxious to avail myself of every practical opportunity of carrying through an amendment of our relations with Ireland in that respect, I never disguised from the electors of North Bristol that having regard to the vast number of questions before the electors at that time I was fully persuaded it would be impossible to expect the Parliament to be elected to devote at any rate the whole of one Session to the introduction and passing through this House of Home Rule. It would involve, unless the House of Lords altered its mind, another election, and therefore it was outside practical politics to enter into consideration of the question. I am not prepared to say how far it was wise or foolish to give such a pledge. I am bound to say I shall not do it again, for reasons which I think will commend themselves to some people's minds. But the pledge has done nobody any harm; it has not done Ireland any harm. The fact is that in our politics you cannot determine, and it does not lie altogether with the deliberate will of so called statesmen to determine, what shall be the questions which are decided at a general election. You cannot do it, and, if I may make the remark in further candour, that is the danger which Home Rule is in at the present moment. At a general election you cannot get the predominant partner to think about anything he does not want to think about. I say there are at present particular questions of great interest and of a controversial character which English people will discuss whether Irish people wish them to do so or not, and it is not in the power of any of us to put a particular question to the predominant partner for determination. That, in my judgment, is one of the reasons for protesting against the present unjust treatment of Ireland in this matter. Ireland is linked to a great and wealthy nation full of serious ideas, thinking of all sorts of novel things—things dear to hon. Gentlemen opposite, and things dear to hon. Gentlemen below the gangway. Every kind of interest is clashing and striving for predominance, and poor Ireland is left behind; she has not the power to make her presence felt, and she is left in a position which to my mind is fatal to her proper development and to her just and true interest. I appeal to all practical politicians whether that is not a fact. Who can say what will be the dominant issue at the next general election? I do not want to use the expression "mandate." I do not altogether recognise the theory of the mandate, but I do recognise that this House, being the representatives for the most part of the great English people, will find themselves, whether they like it or not, compelled to deal first with those questions which have excited the deep interest and aroused the strong feelings of the electors as a whole. Therefore, it is not in the power of anybody to say how or to what extent Home Rule can be made a practical issue at the next election. But I am persuaded that the Liberal Party will maintain the position they have occupied as strong advocates of Home Rule. I will give you that party advantage. I know what you want it for—to serve you a turn along with beer and a good many other things, and to enable you to make a very good figure, in your judgment, at the next election. But I say that if the Irish people desire, as I think they well may, that this question should be prominently before the English people at the next election so that a vote may be taken upon it in some such way as to make it possible, probable even, that some effect should be given to their wishes by legislative enactment, they will do well to make it perfectly clear and plain what their proposals are and what they will accept, and to deal quite frankly with the difficulties, with all of which the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Waterford dealt in the course of his closely reasoned speech, to which I am sorry the noble Lord did not give closer attention in his reply. Let us know what these proposals are, what the safeguards are for the minority in Ireland. Make it perfectly plain, so that the English may see, as I believe they are perfectly ready to see, that the present Parliamentary system is wholly an *impasse* so far as Irish affairs are concerned. I have little doubt that, if that course is taken, and that is made perfectly plain, the great majority of the Liberal electorate, at any rate—I cannot answer for those who think otherwise—will rally round the cause with which their name has been long and honourably associated, to do their best and not leave it to hon. Gentlemen opposite to solve this great difficulty.

*MR. BUTCHER (Cambridge University) said he would not follow the Chief Secretary into a detailed discussion of Irish administrative problems; he would rather call back the attention of the House to some of the greater issues which underlay the momentous question which had been brought before them that afternoon. As he listened to the speech of the hon. and learned Member for Waterford, he wondered whether he recollected the debates which took place in the years 1886 and 1893. The hon. and learned Member told them that all the great objections to Home Rule had by this time been removed, falsified by events. But there were certain cardinal objections which were as valid now as they were then. To-day, they knew more even than in 1886 as to the Imperial bearings of the problem. The questions raised were not the subtleties of constitutional lawyers, they touched at vital points the daily working of the House of Commons and the principles of Imperial administration. In the light of those discussions an abstract resolution in favour of Home Rule was futile and meaningless. It was easy to reel off the glib formula about a separate Parliament and a separate executive; it presented no great difficulty till the care to grapple with a scheme and express Home Rule in legislative form. Many in this House would remember that in both the Bills Mr. Gladstone brought forward, there was one organic detail, as he called it, which went to the heart of the Home Rule problem. It was this. Were the Irish Members to be out of the Imperial Parliament or in it? If out, as under the Bill of 1886, then the effective supremacy of Parliament was gone; its last symbol was removed; it remained a mere phrase, a shadowy sovereignty, a paper supremacy. If, on the other hand, the Irish Members were to be in the House of Commons, or half in, half out, as under the Bill of 1893, then in the words of the present Secretary of State for India, they became—

> "Arbiters and masters of English policy and of the rise and fall of British Administrations."

The result would be that on successive days there might be two majorities in this House supporting opposite policies, according as the Irish Members were present or absent. The Chief Secretary for Ireland had just now said that the future of Ireland was not to be destroyed by a dilemma. But this dilemma was not a bit of mere verbal logic, it was a matter affecting every department of Imperial policy. The reason why the question of the retention or exclusion of the Irish Members never was solved was that it was insoluble. The Home Rule

Bills were an attempt to do the thing that was impossible—to make Ireland at once a part and not a part of the United Kingdom. There was not merely no halfway house between the Union and Home Rule; there was nonebetween the Union and Irish Independence.

The hon. and learned Member had said most truly that an entirely new situation had been created in Ireland since 1886 and 1893. A great measure of land purchase had been passed. An argument for Home Rule had been founded on that measure. It was said that the soil of Ireland was being transferred to the people of Ireland, and that therefore the Government of the country ought in like manner to be transferred. No doubt the Land Purchase Act was a new and important factor in the Home Rule question. British credit had been pledged to the extent of £100,000,000, perhaps £150,000,000. But did not the conclusion to be drawn from the fact point in another direction. The British people might fairly claim to have some adequate security for the repayment of that enormous sum. Although he admitted that hitherto no loans had better been repaid than the sums advanced for land purchase, he maintained that the only guarantee for the continued, orderly and punctual repayment of that money lay in having an executive directly responsible to the Imperial Parliament. But there was another side to land purchase. It involved a great agrarian and social revolution—peaceful, but none the less a revolution. A long land war was drawing to an end; the first necessity was repose, a respite from political turmoil. Already new and burning questions had arisen. Wild hopes had been aroused. The transfer of land would evidently be no simple matter. A movement for the redistribution of land was on foot. Landless and lawless men backed by the branches of the United Irish League were pushing the movement. It had begun in two counties in the west, it had now spread to ten or twelve. No one in his senses could hand over the Government of Ireland at such a moment to an Irish Executive.

Apart from these difficulties the new peasant proprietors needed to be trained to new habits and to learn new methods. For years to come they would need that training. Without it the mere transfer of land must fail of its object; it might even prove to be economically disastrous. What was proposed? That to the agrarian revolution there should be added a political revolution; that between the land war now expiring and the new order of things about to be established they should sandwich in a constitutional change which altered the relations of the three kingdoms. At a moment when social rest was the most pressing of all needs, and the first condition of industrial progress, they were asked to fling the country back into politics and divide all Ireland into two actively hostile camps. It meant years of unrest and ferment, disturbing to agriculture, paralysing to industry. It was unprofitable to run at the same time two ideas so different as social reconstruction and political revolution. In that upheaval agriculture and industry must go under. Political passions were the death of economic progress.

Another fact in the new situation was that Ireland now enjoyed local government. The hon. and learned Gentleman urged its success as an argument for Home Rule. But how had those powers been exercised? What had been the treatment of the minority? True, indeed, local affairs had not on the whole been financially mismanaged; but the Irish Party had missed one of the greatest opportunities they ever had for commending Home Rule to the people of this country. They might have impressed the people of England with their generosity towards the minority. But what happened? In the whole province of Munster there were only two Unionists on the county councils as against 217 Nationalists; in Connaught there were, he believed, two Unionists to 142 Nationalists. In fourteen counties there was only a single Unionist councillor to be found. In all Ireland out of a total of 951 members of county councils only 134 were Unionists, and 116 of those were in Ulster. That state of things had come about by official orders of the United Irish League. He did not complain of this. Many Unionists who were in favour of giving local government to Ireland foresaw that this would probably happen; but none the less the Unionist Party resolved to give it, and rightly so, their position being that Ireland should have every privilege, and every constitutional right that was enjoyed by the rest of the United Kingdom. He quite understood the principle of retaliation. The Nationalists said it was their turn to be uppermost, and they meant to be uppermost. The minority accepted the fact but took note of it. Historic causes were pleaded for it. Yes, and those historic causes would not be removed by Home Rule but intensified in their action. Ireland was deeply divided by difference of race, creed, and tradition. The two Irelands were inveterately opposed; and no scheme of Home Rule could work magic and get rid of these deep-seated causes. But, he submitted, the management of local affairs was one thing and the larger rights of citizenship were another. To be ousted from all management of local affairs was indeed galling, but it was endurable. To be thrust out from the shelter and justice of the Imperial Parliament was intolerable. Irish Unionists claimed no ascendancy; all that they asked for was equality. But they protested against an old ascendancy being replaced by a new domination.

As regards their convictions they were exactly where they were in 1886. The hon. and learned Member for Waterford had spoken of a considerable number of landlords who had become Home Rulers since that date. His own belief was that there were not half-a-dozen landlords in Ireland who had gone over; they had not been so base as to alter their principles, because they had their purchase money in their pockets. The minority, however, were not landlords only, or Ulstermen only, but included scattered groups, and individuals all over Ireland. And their demand was this—that the administration of justice, the repression of crime, the maintenance of public order, and the protection of the rights of property and the rights of conscience should remain in the keeping of the Imperial Parliament. Let them look at Ireland's past, at the history of that country riven with faction, and ask, Is the demand unreasonable? But there were other minorities than that permanent minority—minorities not of race or creed, or politics, but comprising all who in any part of Ireland, in town or village had dared to act in defiance of a dominant opinion or follow an honest calling which local tyrants condemned. For twenty-five years he had watched and waited to see whether the leaders of Nationalist opinion in Ireland would ever utter a word in defence of individual human liberty. In all that concerned the sufferings of peasants in relation to their landlords they had, no doubt, shown deep and genuine sympathy. But he had never known them, either collectively or as individuals, breathe one word in defence of man, woman, or child—rich or poor—who was being oppressed by a dominant majority. At this hour there was proof of it in the persecuted lives of numbers of men in various parts of Ireland. Depend upon it, they could never build up the freedom of a nation on the servitude of the individual.

Now let them imagine what was to him almost unthinkable, that a Home Rule measure had been passed; let them think out one or two of the consequences. One immediate effect was certain. Capital for a time, at least, would be withdrawn. British credit would have gone. There would be a growing and deepening poverty. Hopes that had been raised high were doomed to be disappointed. It would be a moment of disillusionment. The party of disruption would step in. They would press home their argument. It was the argument so often enforced by the leader of the Irish Party in the House of Commons. They would say: "Look at the material decline of the country. Things are going from bad to worse. What is the cause? There is no cause but one. The economic fact is the result of a political cause. It is all due to the malign and blighting influence of the British connection. We are still tied up with England. We have no control over our fiscal system. We cannot protect our trade. We cannot endow our religion. We cannot deal freely with our education. We are fenced in with vexatious safeguards; let them be withdrawn. Let us free our Parliament and free our executive from outside control. Thus only can we realise the dream of our race, the immemorial hope of Irish patriots." What answer could or would be made? Every argument now used for Home Rule would then come back with redoubled force for separation. And mark, there was already in Ireland a party who openly demanded separation. They were not a wild revolutionary gang of Irish Americans, but a party with ideas, and a constructive party—visionary perhaps, but drawing into their ranks the abler intellect among the younger men. They were not animated by a mere barren hatred of England. They appealed to the self-respect of the nation. They desired to build up her industrial character and foster her self-reliance; they called on the people to work out their own regeneration. Would the Parliamentary Home Rulers if once Home Rule had been granted, dare to stand up against that Sinn Fein party? The thing was inconceivable. Join it they would and must from the outset if they were not content to be permanently effaced. And another section of opinion would by that time have come into existence. Friends who had been betrayed were sometimes turned into foes. Many who were now not even Home Rulers would then be Separatists. They would throw themselves into the movement for independence with the embittered sense of rejected loyalty and of spurned allegiance. Of two unspeakable calamities—he hardly liked to say it, yet he believed it in his heart—separation would be the lesser evil, less than the long-drawn agony of a Home Rule period which must inevitably lead through friction and exasperating misunderstanding to disintegration.

He was not blind to the difficulties of the Unionist position. On the other side, however, he placed the incalculable, and to his mind—the insuperable dangers of the Home Rule policy. Home Rule was not merely a political experiment, it was a desperate gamble with Imperial interests; and if it should prove an error, it was an error which was fatal and irretrievable. Patience was needed in dealing with Ireland. It must be remembered that it was within a brief period that thorough remedial measures had been attempted. They could not hope in twenty, thirty, or forty years, to undo the work of centuries. But they, as Unionists, were resolved to go forward with remedial efforts. They were determined to redress every Irish grievance, to apply economic remedies to economic disorders, and to give to Ireland everything that could be given in justice, in generosity, and with safety. But there was need of courage as well as patience in the affairs of nations; and if ever this country should grow faint-hearted and feeble of purpose, if ever she should abandon her great task through weariness or despair, and fall back upon the mad project of discussion, then it would not be Ireland only that would be lost to the Empire.

MR. MASTERMAN (West Ham, N.) said he had listened with great interest to the speeches of the noble Lord who moved the Amendment and the Member for Cambridge University or to the more practical part of them, which dealt with the future, rather than to that which recapitulated the past; because he must confess that on this particular question many of them, especially the younger of them, who had made some attempt to study the Irish question in Ireland and in England, were far more concerned with the new circumstances than with any attempt to fight over again ancient battles and old arguments which had continued for so long, and which were familiar to every Member of the House. In the speech of the hon. Member for Cambridge University, to whom he always listened with the very greatest pleasure because of the earnestness of his statements and of the eloquent way in which they were presented, he could find no kind of hope in the suggested remedies which he offered for what was acknowledged by all to be a very profound scandal to British Government as at present constituted. The second part of the hon. Gentleman's speech was devoted to a demonstration which it seemed to him required the assumption that Ireland was in a thoroughly desirable condition at present. The hon. Member said that Ireland wanted repose, and he offered to give Ireland that repose by a continuance of resolute government. Had that resolute government given Ireland repose for the last twenty years? The hon. Member had said that what was wanted was the sinking of the present violence and political dissension in Ireland. He had listened to a great many violent speeches, but he had never listened to one more violent than that delivered by the hon. Member for Cambridge University in attacking hon. Members below the gangway in regard to Home Rule.

Mr. BUTCHER: No; I did not.

Mr. MASTERMAN: The hon. Gentleman told them that no kind of protection was given to loyalists in the South and West of Ireland at present.

Mr. BUTCHER: I said nothing of the kind. I did not allude to the protection given to them at present.

Mr. MASTERMAN said he was not referring to economic protection He, of course, accepted what the hon. Gentleman said, but, so far as he remembered, the hon. Gentleman's statement was that they were persecuted, and that if they sought redress they found none. In order to carry out the policy of the hon. Member for Cambridge University the Conservative Party would have to be permanently in power, which was a very unlikely thing; secondly, they would require a readjustment of Chief Secretaries within that Party, and, thirdly, they would have to assume that, during the remainder of this century, or any other century, the Irish people (who according to the hon. Member's own statistics, had united by something like 216 to two in protest against that system), were going to accept it in perpetuity. In other words, according to the noble Lord the Member for Kensington, in his most eloquent speech, they were to govern Ireland irrespective of what Ireland's interests were, and just in accordance with what they considered were England's interests. That was a kind of argument leading to a form of Government which must be for ever repugnant to anything like liberal conditions. No one who had followed the course of events during the past twenty years could doubt that the changes which had taken place in English politics, and especially in Liberal politics, were making away from that particular fear which they felt so strongly twenty years ago—that Imperial ideas would be shattered by the granting of Home Rule to Ireland. It was, however, practically only the demand of the Colonies for self-government. It would be very difficult to find any colonial Prime Minister who was not himself an ardent Home Ruler. Of course, the first act of any Imperial Senate such as sometimes figured in the speeches of hon. Gentlemen opposite would be just the granting of self-government to Ireland. The whole new vision of Imperial consolidation, which was no longer a matter of sentiment but of practical commonsense, made away from that particular care which animated people twenty years ago in this country, and which animated a dwindling number to-day. Hon. Members opposite were now anxious. They were anxious when the Irish Council Bill was introduced; they were anxious over this Motion, and appeared as the defenders of great Imperial interests. He noticed that a very specific allusion to Home Rule made by the Chief Secretary was received with a kind of glee by hon Gentlemen above the gangway, as if the right hon. Gentleman had made a confession of some almost improper method of behaviour. But they found that the Imperial Party themselves were in process of disintegration, in their determination to place another great question in front of the great question of the Union. If he rightly understood the correspondence which had been carried on in the newspapers of recent days, one half of the Unionist Party was engaged in trying to effect the political assassination of the other, not because they were wanting in devotion to the Unionist cause, but because they would not toe the line of some particular economic or Protectionist propaganda. Under these circumstances it was a little difficult for hon. Gentlemen opposite to say to them and to the country that they were still defenders of the Union, and that its destruction would be the greatest injury that could be done to Imperial interests. He wondered whether the challenge would be maintained if it were a question between their being able to get Protection if they granted self-government to Ireland, and of their not being able to get it if they denied self-government to Ireland. That was a situation which was not impossible; it was one which they might have even in the next twenty years. A number of hon. Members on the Liberal benches appeared to have made pledges that they would vote against a Home Rule Bill if it were presented in this Parliament. For himself, though he was asked to make pledges, he never dreamt of making them, but he had stated very definitely that if a Home Rule Bill were introduced he would support it, and, as far as he could judge from analysis of the votes, he did not think that he lost a single vote. He honestly believed that this great fear, which was mainly owing to the condition of politics twenty years ago, had altogether gone away, and the feelings which existed in the early eighties were not those of this century. That fear when it came to be faced would prove to be very largely delusive. An organised attempt had been made during the autumn to reveal Ireland as in a state of incipient revolution, to prejudice the minds of the English electors about cattle-driving, with vague suggestions of outrages behind—working up that old spirit which more than anything else was the real reason why Home Rule had not been carried, the spirit of racial and religious antagonism against the vast majority of the people of Ireland. No agitation in recent years had more dismally failed. He had, for his misfortune, had to be concerned with trying to catch the varying current of opinion in a large number of bye-elections. He did not believe that at any bye-election in the autumn ten votes were in the least degree influenced by the cattle-driving in Ireland. Although he did not deny that some of those bye-elections had caused a temporary unhappiness amongst certain Members of the Liberal Party, he could honestly affirm—he might be wrong—that the great mass of the working people of the country, who ultimately decided political questions, had changed their attitude in this matter. They heard it very widely stated that the old heroic vision of some great and generous action in granting Home Rule to Ireland, which inspired the Liberal Party twenty years ago, mainly through the inspiration of one man, had largely died away; but in the present condition of England there had also died away the prejudices, the fears, and the hatreds which unfortunately had checked the granting of what would have opened up a new chapter in the relations between England and Ireland. The difficulty as to Home Rule at present was what had been laid down by the Chief Secretary. It was not that England cared too much, but that England cared too little about it. As one who greatly desired to see this reform, he put his faith in the giving of that reform within a reasonable time, in the hope that England would be roused by one side or the other to take a profound interest in the question. Ireland would get self-government in one or at most two successive Parliaments, when her representatives would hold the balance of power. To-night they had heard once again a revival of the emphasis upon certain difficulties in the working out of such a scheme which were threshed out before the British electorate over ten years ago and upon which most people had made up their minds. But those difficulties did not prevent the House declaring in favour of what would have been a reasonable and practical measure of Irish Home Rule. But surely twenty years of resolute government, judged by any kind of test which could be applied by those who looked upon the matter with an impartial view, stood condemned by the verdict of history as having failed in just that particular enterprise which it set itself to accomplish. That twenty years was now at an end and it had not produced a prosperous yield. The hon. Member for Cambridge University had spoken about the unexampled generosity with which Ireland had been treated during those twenty years. He knew that a considerable amount of the British taxpayers' money had gone into the pockets of the Irish landlords, and when that was described as generosity it made them revise their fundamental definition of what generosity was.

MR. BUTCHER said the gift of peasant proprietorship was the greatest gift that had ever been made to any country.

MR. MASTERMAN said that if the Irish Land Act had never been passed the Irish tenant would have been able to make better terms than he was able to make at the present time. A certain amount of money had been served out, not to Irish peasants, but to people who were living under conditions which were a disgrace to any definition of what should be an Imperial race. And now they were asked to pat themselves on the back for the miserable amount they had served out under those conditions. But there was another and a very strong side to the picture. They had not stopped emigration from Ireland, which, he was told, was worse this year than it had been for many years past. Their policy had not given anything like commercial, industrial, or agrarian prosperity to Ireland, and they had not made it an island content with its present condition. Throughout those parts of Ireland which were most affected they could not find a single representative who would say that the twenty years of resolute government was an earnest of desirable things for the future. That policy had not stopped boycotting nor the rule of the United Irish League, and it had not put an end to the village tyrant, the too insistent clericalism and all those evils which it was said would make Home Rule impossible. Some of them thought there was only one way of remedying these evils. It was better for a nation to be self-governed than well governed, and the more they came in from outside as an alien government to settle those questions the more impossible would they find their task. Those problems would have to be settled by the people themselves. He could not understand anyone upholding Liberal principles believing that self-government could be a real menace to the Empire or to England as a whole. In his opinion, there was no other way out of the *impasse*, which was becoming more intolerable every year.

*MR. MALLET (Plymouth) said that he considered that Mr. Gladstone's scheme was by far the wisest solution of this problem which had ever been proposed to the House of Commons. The policy of allowing their own people to govern themselves was the strength of their Empire all the world over, and was the only real source of loyalty and freedom. But after all that had happened, they could not attempt to settle this great problem all at once. After the pledges given at the last election they could not attempt in this Parliament to pass a Home Rule Bill, and he for one would be content to accept any smaller measure which would take them even a little way towards the end they had in view, which was the government of Ireland, by Irishmen, in Ireland and not here. He was convinced that even amongst the Unionist Party the necessity for and the reasonableness of Home Rule was beginning to make way. He did not want to call it Home Rule if the term was objectionable to hon. Members opposite, but the principle of governing Ireland by Irishmen was coming home even to the Unionist Party. He submitted that the scare against an Irish Parliament which was worked up so successfully in 1886 was not due so much to the fear of a Parliament in Dublin, or to any special affection for the legislative union which had never been anything but a misfortune to Ireland and a weakness to this country. That scare was due to the fear of the Irish Land League, to the fear of violence and disorder, to the old rancorous slanders about Parnellism and crime repeated by men who ought to have known better. That was what alarmed the British electorate and defeated Mr. Gladstone's great design. Those who believed in the principle of Home Rule held the opinion that when those prejudices abated the feeling in this country against Home Rule would disappear, and once they had patience and order in Ireland the reasonableness of their proposals for governing Ireland through the men who knew her best would come home to the minds of the English people. Was it not clear from what had happened in the last twenty years that that view was well justified, and that ideas of self-government were making way even in the Unionist Party? Viceroys and Chief Secretaries went over to Ireland as Unionists, and they came back, not perhaps converted to Home Rule, but at least converted to a deep distrust in the present system of Irish administration. New schemes of economic improvement sprang up under men like Sir Horace Plunkett—whose loss to Irish administration he deplored—to teach Irishmen the reconciling doctrines of self-help. Everything else in Ireland changed and altered; but the policy of the Ulster

Party continued for ever, as changeless and about as cheerful as the grave. On the other hand, following the history of the last few years, when they saw Unionist Viceroys discussing drafts of a devolution scheme in Dublin, when they saw Under-Secretaries who were known to be sympathetic Home Rulers, appointed in Ireland by the Unionist Party, when they saw a Chief Secretary in this House lending such a sympathetic ear to those proposals that he became suspected even in the camp of his friends, then they must admit that the idea of self-government in one form or another was making some way in the Tory Party. He remembered an interesting speech by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dover, in which he stated very clearly what the policy of his Administration was, and he presumed that that was still the policy of the Tory Party. He told them that the Unionist policy in Ireland had six or seven points, of which the most important was conciliation. The right hon. Gentleman knew as well as hon. Members on that side of the House that no reform was possible or worth having in Ireland unless they carried the Irish people with them in their work. The Administration of the right hon. Gentleman did not altogether succeed in securing the support of his Party, but still, no one who remembered the circumstances would deny that he took a line of strong sympathy with Nationalist aims in Ireland. Without some such sympathetic administration no policy in Ireland could possibly succeed. It was only when gentlemen from Ireland had a really decisive voice in this House that proposals would be put forward which perhaps would get this great question finally settled. Whether they called it devolution, or conciliation, or Home Rule, or anything else, sooner or later, in one shape or another, it was bound to come. Sooner or later they would have to accept the expedient recommended to-day in the motion of the Irish leader, of governing Ireland according to Irish ideas, through institutions planted among the Irish people and worked by men whom the Irish people trusted.

Mr. GEORGE CLARK (Belfast, N.) complimented the mover of the Resolution on the ability of his speech, with the sentiment of which, however, he entirely disagreed. He was thoroughly convinced that the grant of Home Rule to Ireland would be ruinous to that country, and disastrous to the interests of the Empire. The Chief Secretary was over in Ulster quite recently, and told them that he had got most of his information in regard to Ireland from having three times attended the play of "John Bull and his Island." That might be an easy and entertaining way of studying the manners and customs of the people, but it was exceedingly unsatisfactory for those who had to live in that country. There were two distinct and separate peoples in Ireland—the Unionists and the Nationalists, who had no community of ideals or of purpose. The Unionists were British to the core, and were determined at all costs that Ireland should remain an integral portion of the kingdom, whereas the Nationalists wanted Ireland for themselves alone. They made no secret of it and were accustomed to boast in season and out of season of their antipathy and hatred of Great Britain and everything that was British. The great majority of the Unionists lived in Ulster, and it was the custom of the Nationalists to brand the opposition of Ulster to Home Rule as the outcome of unreasoning bigotry and intolerance, and to charge them with shutting the door in the face of national aspirations and ideals, and with having no alternative policy to suggest to Home Rule. Although he was not Irish-born he had lived in Ulster for nearly thirty years, and he had no hesitation in assuring the House that that statement with regard to the opposition of the Ulster people was entirely without foundation. The Belfast man had as much patriotism and pride as the man of Dublin or Galway in that country which to the true Irish heart would always be—

> "The first flower of the earth,
> The first gem of the sea."

But he believed that it was in union with Britain that the best interests of his country could be preserved. With regard to the alternative policy, he was a member of a deputation that waited upon Mr. Gladstone in 1893, consisting of members of the Belfast Chamber of

Commerce, the Belfast Harbour Commissioners, and the Linen Merchants' Association, all non-political bodies. They submitted a document to Mr. Gladstone setting forth that in their opinion the reasonable wants of Ireland would be fully met: (1) By any mode of dealing rapidly and simply with the land question, consistent with justice and honour; (2) by some arrangement of local government similar to that lately created in England and Scotland; (3) by an adequate reform of Private Bill Procedure; and (4) by such aid from Imperial credit as would in a suitable and economic way assist in the development of Irish industries when and where such assistance might be required. Of these proposals three had become law. As the result of the Land Act of 1903, involving British credit to the extent of £100,000,000, there was now springing up all over Ireland a band of sturdy and self-reliant occupying owners. A Local Government Act similar to that passed for England and Scotland had removed that grievance of inequality with regard to local government which was one of the main arguments for Home Rule. An Agricultural and Technical Department had also been established to foster agriculture and Irish industries. The proposal as to Private Bill Procedure had not yet become law, but the Belfast Chamber of Commerce, of which he was Vice-President, was leaving no stone unturned to have it accomplished. Their representatives had met the representatives of Dublin, Cork, and Derry, and a scheme was evolved suggesting for Ireland a method of Private Bill Procedure similar to that existing for Scotland. He understood that the Government did not take it up because of the difficulty of finding a suitable rota of men to undertake local inquiries. The alternative policy of the Unionists was the maintenance of the Union under which measures might become law, and whereby the rights of every Irishman as a citizen of the United Kingdom would be preserved. It was a significant fact that under the Unionist Government which had pursued that policy, Ireland was more peaceful than it had been for 600 years. People were settling down to manage their affairs, free from distractions and forebodings and shrinking of capital, with which they were threatened in the dark days of 1886 and 1893, and with peace came prosperity. Belfast 120 years ago was a small village with 13,000 people, and to-day its population was well-nigh 400,000. The valuation of the city had increased from £741,000 in 1893, to £1,480,000 in 1907. The tonnage cleared from the port in 1893 was 2,000,000 tons. Last year, it reached 2,584,234 tons, and it would have been more but for the disorders that broke out in the city, and which were fostered, he was sorry to say, by the Nationalist Party and Press. In Belfast, there were 120,000 people employed in the linen trade, and last year that trade had enjoyed a state of prosperity unknown since the time of the American War. In shipbuilding, the amount of tonnage launched and completed on the banks of the Lagan made Belfast the third shipbuilding centre in the United Kingdom. The harbour receipts of the city were over 40 per cent., or nearly half the total receipts of all Ireland. The amount collected by the Customs and Inland Revenue Department was £3,168,402—a contribution surpassed by no port in the United Kingdom except London and Liverpool. The fact that this progress had been made under the same laws which governed all the other towns and cities in Ireland had a distinct bearing on the case they were now considering. Everybody must admit that those statistics went to show that all Ireland was not in that wretched condition as to which they were constantly informed by hon. Members below the gangway. In the North where the people were loyal, thrifty, and industrious, they were prosperous. It was only in the South and West, where the people were as a rule lazy, thriftless, and improvident, that there was any want of prosperity. [Cries from the IRISH Benches of "Oh," "How do you know?" and "Withdraw."] He had travelled there and seen for himself. Further, he had a Report which was evidence on the point he was bringing forward which he picked up in Aberdeen. It was a Report by the Scottish Agricultural Commission appointed by the Secretary for Scotland three years ago to go to Denmark to inquire into the state of agriculture in that country.

MR. EUGENE WASON (Clackmannan and Kinross): I think the hon. Gentleman is in error. The present Secretary for Scotland was not appointed three years ago.

MR. GEORGE CLARK: Well, two years ago. The Commission was appointed irrespective of politics. No one knew the political constitution of the body. When the Commission returned from Denmark it occurred to the right hon. Gentleman to have a similar Report for Ireland. It was not possible to get all the gentlemen who went to Denmark to go to Ireland, but as many of them as possible went over to Ireland, and they were reinforced by others. At any rate it was a Commission appointed by a Radical Minister. The Commission met in Dublin and they decided that it would be more satisfactory if they divided into two parties, one going north and the other to the south and west; and this was what they said in their Report—

"Ireland is basin-shaped. The mountains round the coast are the rim . . . . Within this basin there are really two Irelands. There is the Ireland in the north, where the land is, comparatively speaking, poor land and the climate cold, where the farmers are shrewd, intelligent men, who have made the most of their circumstances. The farm steadings are trim and well kept. The land is well tilled. There is an air of prosperity about the country. There is the Ireland of the south, where the land is better and the climate milder, and the people, possibly to some extent because nature has done so much for them, are less energetic; where the steadings are ill kept and the land badly tilled, and waste and neglect are much in evidence. The difference between the two Irelands is so great that when the section of the Scottish Agriculture Commission which went north met the section which went south, they had formed entirely different conceptions of farming in Ireland. The northern section was inclined to compare Irish farming, as they had seen it, to Danish farming. There seemed to be the same intelligence applied to agriculture as in Denmark. There seemed to be the same economy and thrift practised on the farms. There seemed to be something approaching to the same comfort. The southern section, on the other hand, were disappointed. They saw good land in a good climate going to waste for want of energy on the part of the farmers. They saw bad and badly-kept farm buildings. They saw an Ireland where, to the outside observer, the policy of the Department of Agriculture would, if followed, produce the earliest and most fruitful results, and yet that policy was making comparatively little headway."

*MR. GWYNN (Galway): In which part does the Report place Donegal, Tyrone, and Cavan, for instance?

MR. GEORGE CLARK said he thought the Report certainly showed that the prosperity or wretchedness of the people was due not so much to the form of government but to the character of the people themselves. He was more than pleased that this Home Rule Resolution had been brought forward, for he was convinced that the people of Great Britain were as satisfied now as they were in 1893 that to give Home Rule to Ireland would mean ruin to that country and disaster to the Empire. With the mover of the Resolution he hoped that they should have a clean, straight fight on that issue. They in Ulster complained that at the last general election the Liberals shirked the Home Rule issue because they knew that the people of Great Britain would have none of it. The Prime Minister had talked about Home Rule by instalments. They all knew how the first instalment was received by the Nationalists—with scorn. He was not surprised at it, as anything in the form of freak comparable with it was seldom seen. Its authors used to upbraid those on that side of the House for raising what he called the bogey of Home Rule. Did he call it a bogey now? At that time it was "up with the Chinese and down with the priests." The right hon. Gentleman little thought that he would be connected so soon with the administration of Ireland and be compelled to run to the priests for refuge. When all others failed, the right hon. Gentleman had recently paid a visit to Ulster, but in the many humourous speeches which he delivered there he never once mentioned the subject of Home Rule. And why? Because he knew that there were not a dozen Radicals in Ulster who had any sympathy with Home Rule. The Ulster Radical Party had not even passed a resolution in favour of the Irish Council Bill. What about the head of that great body? How did he stand on this question? Did he stand on the Home Rule bank shivering, afraid to make the plunge? Or was he like the Chief Secretary and the Prime Minister, prepared to establish a Parliament in Dublin against which he used to speak with such vigour and earnestness fourteen years ago? On this question they had to complain that the Nationalists spoke with so many different voices. They had heard in speeches from the hon. and learned Member for Waterford and other Nationalist Members that what they said in Great Britain did not represent their true feelings, but that separation was the goal at which they were aiming. In New York in 1902 the hon. Member for West Belfast said—(he quoted from the *Irish People*, a paper which he fancied was more popular with the Nationalist Members to-day than it was a few months ago)—

> "When equipped with comparative freedom, then would be the time for those who think we should destroy the last link that binds us to England to operate by whatever means they think best to achieve that great and desirable end. I am sure I speak for the United Irish League in the matter."

Speaking at Worcester, U.S.A., in the autumn of 1901, the hon. and learned Member for Waterford declared—

> "Out ultimate goal is the national independence of our country. I say in its essence the national movement is the same to-day as it was in the days of Hugh O'Neill, of Owen Roe, of Emmet or of Wolfe Tone, to overturn the foreign domination in our land and to put Irishmen in charge of their own affairs. The object has always been the same. Whether the freedom of Ireland is attained by moral suasion or physical force, what difference so long as it is achieved ?"

There was a more aggressive tone about that than about the present Resolution. The hon. and learned Gentleman in Great Britain, and in this House roared as gently as a sucking dove; he roared as sweetly as a nightingale; but when he went across the water to America, or went down among the poor and ignorant peasantry of the South and West of Ireland——

MR. JOYCE (Limerick): They are as well-educated and intelligent as you are.

MR. GEORGE CLARK: Then his whole tone changed, and there he went about like a rampant roaring lion seeking whom he might devour. But he could assure the hon. and learned Member that when he came to devour Ulster he would find——

MR. JOHN O'CONNOR (Kildare, N.). Will you allow me, Mr. Deputy-Speaker, to ask the hon. Gentleman if he will repeat these words outside this House ? Will he call the Irish people lazy and ignorant ?

MR. DEPUTY - SPEAKER: The hon. Member must not interrupt the hon. Gentleman who is in possession of the House.

MR. JOHN O'CONNOR: He is taking advantage of his position. He is a coward, and a cad.

MR. GEORGE CLARK: The hon. Gentleman would find that he was tackling a tough and prickly morsel. *Nemo me impune lacessit* was as true of the men who lived North of the Boyne as of those who lived North of the Tweed.

MR. CHARLES CRAIG (Antrim, S.): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, is it in order for an hon. Member below the Gangway to call—as I heard—my friend "coward" and "a cad ?"

MR. JOHN O'CONNOR: I admit it at once.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: It is not in order to make use of such expressions. I must ask the hon. Member to withdraw.

MR. JOHN O'CONNOR: I repeat what I said. I will not withdraw.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: I name you, Mr. O'Connor, for disregarding the ruling of the Chair.

MR. JOHN O'CONNOR immediately rose and left the House.

MR. GEORGE CLARK, continuing, said that the hon. Member for East Mayo had declared at Thurles three years ago, that they should never have in Ireland a really prosperous and happy land until the rule of England was swept clean out of Ireland. Whose voice were they to believe ? They, the loyalists, lived in Ireland and were in close touch with the Nationalists every day of their lives, and were better able to judge by experience of their feelings and aspirations than Members of the House. They applied to them an infallible test, viz., they judged them by their fruits, that one did not gather figs from thorns and grapes from thistles. A good tree did not put forth evil fruit, and cattle-driving, boycotting, intimidation, and outrage were not acts which received the approval of honest and honourable men. He had not yet heard them denounced by Nationalist Members. In the very first sentence of the Resolution there were two fallacies. The first was that the present system of government of Ireland was in opposition to the will of the Irish people. Who were the Irish people? He thought every one would admit that the Unionists, who formed one-third of the population, and who were the loyal law-abiding and industrious section, were entitled to be heard when they declared, and declared emphatically, that they were satisfied to have the government of the country in the hands of the Imperial Parliament. The second fallacy was that Irishmen had no voice in the management of their own affairs, for the Irishmen in Antrim and Cork had as much voice in the affairs of his country as the Englishmen in Yorkshire, or the Scotsmen in Ayrshire had in his; indeed, the Cork man had more to say than he was entitled to, because of the over-representation of Ireland in proportion to the population, which was a matter of common knowledge. The hon. Gentleman complained of the cost of the government of Ireland, but whose fault was it if the cost was more than it ought to be? A great deal of the money was for education, and the administration of the law, and he was not aware that the hon. Member for Waterford would like to see the education grant reduced. He knew that they, as Unionists, would like to see a very large increase of it, if it were only reasonably administered. Then, again, the cost of the administration of the law could be reduced if Nationalists would live in a rational, orderly, and reasonable manner. It was the fact that under the present administration it had been found necessary to add considerably to the police force and the cost of it. That was to say that, under a Home Rule Chief Secretary, with Ireland governed more or less in accordance with Irish ideas, lawlessness and the police force were increasing. What would be the condition of affairs under a Home Rule Parliament, he could not tell. Perhaps the Royal Irish Constabulary would be disbanded and their duties handed over to the village ruffians who shot innocent men and women from behind hedges, attempted to deprive the living of the necessities of life and the dead the rights of burial. The argument that it was necessary for the material prosperity of Ireland that she should have an Imperial Parliament in Dublin had been exploded long ago. The position of Ulster was a standing refutation of the charge that the poverty of Ireland was due to British rule. Without the natural advantages which other parts of Ireland possessed, and without the aid of Government grants, the people of Ulster, by their courage and perseverance, had built up enterprises which compared favourably with any in the whole of the United Kingdom. There was a great deal of truth in the statement made to him the other day with respect to Ireland by a gentleman who sat on the Front Government Bench, when he said that there were three P's there which might be dispensed with with advantage, viz., publicans, politicians, and priests, and that if there were less of them in secular affairs there would be a better prospect of material prosperity. They regretted that the Nationalist parts of Ireland were so backward and poor, but they said that the fault did not lie with the Imperial Parliament, but with the people themselves. If they would devote their energies to agitation instead of to work, and persist in cattle-driving instead of in cattle-feeding, how could they hope to be prosperous? He was not going to use the strong language of the Member for South Tyrone, who declared that the poverty of Ireland was due to "the blackguardism and crime of the Nationalist agitators," but he would repeat his words that instead of blaming Parliament the Nationalists should blame their own leaders, who had never shown any disposition to allow the people to settle down to serious work. He had lived in Ireland for thirty years, and he never came across a single Englishman or Scotsman who had gone to Ireland to live who favoured the policy of Home Rule, and from his knowledge of the people of Ulster, of all classes, he was convinced that they were as determined as ever not to submit to Home Rule. If the people of England thought that the people of Ulster would ever agree to have their lives and their liberties placed under the control of the Nationalists of Ireland, they were very much mistaken. And how could they force them to submit? Were they going to apply coercion to them? Were they going to make it a crime to be loyal and industrious? He had too much faith in the justice of his fellow-countrymen to believe that they would ever attempt to coerce the people of Ulster to submit to a Government with which they would be entirely out of sympathy. He could assure the House that they were all sick of the Home Rule agitation. The perpetual raising of the question tended to uneasiness and disorder. If they would only let the Nationalists know plainly that they were not going to get an Irish Parliament and suppress with a firm hand disorder in the country, they would take the heart out of that foolish agitation and give Ireland a chance of settling down and progressing along the path of material prosperity. Of policy, cunning, craft, subtlety, they had already a plethora in Ireland. It was to that fact that most of her woes were to be attributed. He believed that if the present Administration would only try for a change a little more honesty of purpose they would find their task of governing the country very much easier. The loyalists of Ireland were proud of being British subjects, subjects of an Empire the product of the union of various nationalities, in the building up of which Irishmen had taken no small part. He felt that they had a bounden duty to maintain the unity and integrity of that Empire, and it was for that reason they so strenuously opposed the proposal now before the House.

*MR. BARNES (Glasgow, Blackfriars) said that had he not been a Home Ruler he would have found a good deal to make him one in the speech to which they had just listened—a speech which was studiously offensive to a chivalrous and high-spirited people among whom the hon. Member had found a home and means of living. He wished to associate himself and his colleagues of the Labour Party with the Resolution brought forward by the hon. Member for Waterford, and they tendered the hon. Member and the Irish Party their whole-hearted sympathy and support in their demand for Home Rule. He thought he might, if it were necessary, say that they of the Labour Party would support any Government which made a really genuine effort to settle in harmony with the wishes of the Irish people this long-standing, painful, and weakening controversy. He believed that every one of the Members of the Labour Party, without exception, was a Home Ruler, and he thought he might also say that he spoke not only for the Members of the Labour Party, with whom he was identified, but also for the Members of that Party who sat on the opposite side of the House. They were Home Rulers because they refused to stand in the way of giving the people of Ireland the government of their own country, to which they were fully entitled. They were also Home Rulers because they were accustomed to Home Rule in the management of those organisations which had been instrumental in sending them to the House. A great deal had been said by the noble Lord who moved the Amendment, as to the difficulty of drawing a precise line of demarcation between Imperial and local matters. He seemed to think that the difficulty of drawing those lines of demarcation would be a fruitful topic of controversy during the time such a Bill was under discussion, and he invited Irish Members to submit a Bill, he supposed with the idea that this fruitful source of controversy would spoil the chance of such a measure being passed. He had further said that after the Bill was passed the lines of demarcation would continue to be fruitful sources of controversy amongst the Irish people. If he might give a modest illustration he would refer again to the organisations which had been the means of sending Labour representatives to Parliament, and which had settled this matter of central versus local authority. If he were to make any complaint about the settlement at all, it would be that the local men had too much Home Rule. At all events, they would never think of imposing upon the branches of their organisation those degrading conditions which had been imposed by Parliament upon the people of Ireland. They had heard a great deal in the course of the debate in the nature of prophecy as to what would take place in the event of Home Rule being passed. The hon. Member for Cambridge University had tried to curdle their blood, so to speak, with dreadful details of what would happen: people flying at one another's throats, for instance. They who had read the political history of the country had been accustomed to these dreadful tales being pitched into their ears on the occasion of every measure of social, industrial, or political freedom for the people of this country, and the marvel, to his mind, was that, in spite of the fact that they had been found to be absolutely false every time, hon. Members could still tell the same old tale just as though nothing had happened. One particular thing had emerged from this part of the discussion. It was said that in the event of Home Rule being passed the people of Ireland would be disposed to repudiate their indebtedness under the provisions for acquiring possession of the land. He dared say that some such tale was told when the people of Canada were granted Home Rule. At all events, it needed but little refutation. If the Irish representatives desired that there should be repudiation of those debts, why did they not do it now? If Ireland had Home Rule every one of these Gentlemen would be more concerned, seeing that they would have a larger sense of responsibility, inasmuch as they would be taking a larger share in the management and control of Irish affairs, and instead of encouragement being given to repudiation of that character, very likely the opposite would be the fact. The last speaker had had a good deal to say in very bad taste, he thought, as to the difference between the people of the South and of the North of Ireland, but he had failed to mention one thing which very largely, if not altogether, accounted for that difference, the difference in the economic conditions under which the people in the North had been living, as compared with the people in the South. The hon. Member appeared never to have heard of the principle of tenant right, which had given to the people of the North of Ireland some little protection, at all events, against the rapacity of the landlords which had been denied to people of the South of Ireland. They were in favour of Home Rule for Ireland because they believed the people of Ireland were entitled to it, because they had asked for it, and because they believed they were entitled to ask for it. British rule had proved itself to be alien to the spirit of the Irish people, and contrary to their wishes, and that fact alone was sufficient to condemn it. From Dublin Castle down to the humblest member of the Irish Constabulary they found that the Government was regarded with aversion, sometimes almost amounting to hatred, on the part of the Irish people. He did not speak from mere hearsay, but as the result of some knowledge acquired by inquiry and observation upon the spot. It might be as the Chief Secretary had said, that there was no corruption in the administration of Irish affairs in a venal sense. It would be improper for him to say otherwise after the statement of the Chief Secretary, but they had heard a great deal about favouritism and discrimination as against those of certain religious or political views, and he thought from what he had heard, that the dominant class and party in Ireland had not been slow to show that favouritism and discrimination. That itself figured in the mind of the Irish people as corruption, and in that opinion he thought they were not far wrong. A great deal had been said about the alleged lawlessness and disloyalty of the Irish people. That seemed to him, if anything, to add to the damning indictment of the British rule of Ireland. After all, Irish people were not naturally a lawless people in those countries where they had had a chance of taking a part in the government, and their loyalty was best demonstrated by the fact that time and time again ever since the franchise had been lowered so as to get a real expression of the will of the people, they had sent to that House, and that in spite of the determination of a great political Party to wear them down by resolute government, four-fifths of their representatives to demand Home Rule. Twenty-one years had passed since it was decided that Ireland should be treated to that twenty years of resolute government which was to dragoon the people into submission if it was not possible to make them acquiesce in a system of government in which they did not believe, and they found to-day the Irish people were just as determined in their demand, just as loyal to their leaders, as filled with hatred of the system of British rule as at the beginning of the twenty years. Another twenty years would make not the slightest difference. Obedience to a Government, loyalty to the laws of a Government and all those other virtues of which they heard so much from that remnant of a once great political Party who occupied the benches above him, might, and he thought would, follow the conferring on the people of Ireland of the rights to which they were entitled; but they had never preceded the conferring on a country of the rights to which it was entitled unless in the case of a people whose spirit was broken, or a people who were instinctively slaves. That could not be said of the Irish people. On the contrary, they were a high-spirited and chivalrous race, who had shown themselves up to and in many cases above the average of political ability in those countries where they had gone, and for that reason he added his voice on behalf of organised labour to those that had already gone up, asking that as speedily as possible this useless and senseless struggle should be terminated by the grant of Home Rule. He claimed that Ireland should be given those rights of taking part in the affairs of the country which had been granted them elsewhere, and in the exercise of which they had shown more than average capacity. Now he came to his second point. There might be many Members who would not be influenced by sentimental arguments. Some of the arguments he had used were only sentimental arguments; but, so far as he could gather, even from the point of view of practical results British rule in Ireland had been found to be a dismal and costly failure, costly to England as well as to Ireland, Home Rule was not only an Irish but an English and a Scottish question. It was a Glasgow question. Eighteen hundred of his constituents were Irishmen, forced out of their country by ruthless landlordism, and denied the right to rule themselves. He would not say that all these bad effects were due to British rule, but at all events, they found them concurrently with British rule, and that was quite sufficient for his argument. He had said nothing of the financial strain, which was very considerable. If they had a police, for instance, two or three times as numerous as they ought to be, of course somebody must be the poorer. If they had a judicial system very largely engaged in defending the property of an absentee class, there again somebody must pay; and if they had a people impoverished by landlordism, the cost of collecting the ordinary means of government and administration must be larger than it was in a rich community. All these things were incidental to the position in Ireland, and they all flowed from the main stream from which Ireland's losses flowed. He attached very little importance to these subordinate considerations, because, after all, any readjustment that they might make in regard to finance would only be temporary and trifling in its results. For instance, if twelve or fourteen years ago there had been a readjustment in accordance with the findings of the Commission, even already that readjustment would be out of date because of the decrease of population in Ireland and the increase here. It was a lamentable fact that during the last fifty-six years there had left the shores of Ireland a number of people almost if not quite equal to the whole present population of the country—that was to say, Irishmen, whose love of country was a passion, made all the greater because of the sufferings of the bravest and best of her sons, and the tragic history of the country, had left its shores, probably in larger numbers than had the people of any other country under the sun. The Emigration Returns up to the end of last year showed that in the last year no less than 40,000 people, in round numbers, left Ireland for Great Britain and elsewhere. Eighty per cent. went to America, there to spread the hatred of British rule, and perhaps at some critical time in our history to turn the scale against us. Of those 40,000 more than half were men, and of those men 16,555 were between the ages of twenty and forty. That was to say, they were a source of wealth to the country willing to produce far more in wealth than they would take as wages, and yet they had to leave their own country because there was no living for them there. During the last two years the Labour Party had been urging the Government to deal with the question of unemployment, and the President of the Local Government Board had received a sum of money to enable him to deal with that problem. Part of the money he had used in sending people to Canada and elsewhere, and at the same time the Emigration Returns showed that during the last two years 8,127 people had left Ireland for this country. He had not dissected that figure, but probably more than half were men. At all events, 67 per cent. of the men were labouring men; and it was perfectly clear that, whilst men had been sent out of this country by the expenditure of public money, men of a similar class had come into this country to intensify unemployment. So that if there had been any gain in throwing our surplus out of the window, that gain had been lost by the constant stream of immigration from Ireland through the door. It was time, therefore, they gave up legislating for Ireland, and handed the work over to the Irish people who, he believed, would make a better show. Another thing he had in his mind was the congestion of their own business. He was concerned to give Ireland Home Rule, because the House had more work to do of its own than it could get through efficiently. A great deal of the work done in the House ought to be done in Ireland, a great deal in Scotland, and a great deal in Wales. A great deal of what he said applied to Ireland, Scotland and Wales, but why should Ireland wait? The Irish people were ready for Home Rule, and sent four-fifths of the representatives of that country to the House of Commons to demand it. It devolved on the Government in office to devise ways and means of getting over the difficulty as a bare act of justice to Ireland. On Friday afternoon the House was for some three and a half hours discussing the kind of inspection there should be in Irish clubs. Had they not sufficient trouble with regard to their own clubs? Many hon. Members with whom he was acquainted felt very strongly about English clubs and Scottish clubs. He maintained that the House had quite enough to do in discussing what was happening on this side of the Channel without occupying its time in discussing the inspection of Irish clubs. Summing up, he said that he was in favour of Home Rule because the Irish people were entitled to it; he was in favour of it because the results of British rule were not of such a character as to justify them in carrying it further, and he was in favour of it because he believed in devolution. He believed the Irish people could manage their own business far better than this country could manage it for them, no matter how desirous we might be to do the best for them. Any one of the reasons he had given would justify Home Rule, but certainly the three together justified the Irish people demanding that the affairs of Ireland should be handed over to and be controlled by Irish representatives who had the trust of the Irish people.

MR. ATHERLEY-JONES (Durham, N.W.) expressed himself as being one of a scanty number of English Liberals now in the House who in 1886 voted for Mr. Gladstone's Home Rule Bill. He claimed to have a still longer and older association with the cause, because his association with it commenced in that time of terror which culminated in the execution of three unfortunate men in the City of Manchester for what he believed was an unfortunate political crime. The opinions in favour of Home Rule which he entertained in 1886 had been confirmed and strengthened throughout the period which had elapsed since that Bill unfortunately met with defeat. The Resolution moved by the hon. and learned Member for Waterford was not levelled in any hostile sense against either the Liberal Government or the Liberal Party. It was conceded with great generosity by the hon. and learned Gentleman that the Chief Secretary for Ireland had made an honest and sincere attempt to solve the Irish question, and the Resolution was only aimed at securing from the Liberal Party that which they would cheerfully give, the assertion of their intention in the next Parliament to bring in a measure of Home Rule, which would fall within the lines marked out by the Resolution of the hon. Member. The debate had not been uninstructive. He had listened with great attention to the speech made with more courage than modesty by a newly elected Member for one of the northern constituencies of Ireland. He had thought that language of that provocative kind had ceased to be one of the weapons of the Unionist Party of Ireland. Of this he was sure, that had he entertained such opinions as the hon. Member expressed of his countrymen he would have dissembled his views. He wished to remind the two or three Unionist Members present of what the opposition to the Home Rule proposals of Mr. Gladstone in 1886 was founded upon. He asserted, without the slightest hesitation, that the whole of the opposition was founded on the fear that the access to power of the popular party in Ireland would lead to unjust legislation and administration in respect to the landowners in Ireland. The late Duke of Devonshire, of whom everybody must speak with admiration and respect for his courage and honesty, founded his opposition entirely upon that. Those Liberals who had severed themselves from their Party had founded their opposition on the same reason. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, the cause of whose absence they deplored, he remembered, in that House, said that if the Ulster question, the religious difficulty, were the only matter in controversy, he would not allow it to stand in the way of reform. He agreed that under the influence of inflammatory speeches from those who ought to know better, speeches such as they had heard that night, the more ignorant and more bigoted—he would not use those harsh words—the more devoted and religious character of Protestantism in the North of Ireland might have somewhat affected the volume of opposition to Mr. Gladstone's Home Rule Bill. High-sounding phrases were used just in the same way as the words "integrity of the Empire" were used as a stalking horse by those who feared the economic effect of Home Rule. He had listened with interest to the speech of the hon. Member for Cambridge University, because he remembered a letter of the hon. Gentleman which appeared in *The Times* in, he thought, May of 1886. In that letter the hon. Member admitted the gravity of the problem which was then occupying the attention of the country, he might say of the world. In that letter the hon. Gentleman remarked that if the land question was out of the way, then he would be prepared to concede a just measure of self-government to Ireland. That was the attitude almost universally of the Unionists in 1886. What had they done? It was the irony of fate. A Conservative Government had been instrumental in transferring the land from the landlords to the tenants of Ireland. The fact that men like Lord Dunraven and others whom he could name had joined together in collaboration with the right hon. Member for Dover — he did not think that would be denied—and entered into a scheme of devolution which in fact would have laid the foundation ultimately of a Home Rule system, to his mind was the strongest possible proof of the economic difficulty being the only real difficulty. That difficulty had been removed, and there was left a purely factious opposition founded on bigotry and supported by ignorance. He was very glad that the Amendment threatened from those benches had not been moved. It contained the saving clause that the supremacy of the Imperial Parliament must be preserved. Again he taxed his memory, and he remembered a speech of the right hon. Gentleman who was now our Minister at Washington, in which he informed the House of what every constitutional lawyer knew, that the supremacy of Parliament was absolutely inalienable over all our dominions. If they wanted an illustration of that they had it in Canada, to which they conceded the fullest measure of responsible Government that had ever been conceded to any of the Colonies, yet there was no section providing for the reservation of Imperial supremacy, because it was inalienable. The noble Lord the Member for Kensington, whose speech was marked by that ability which they had recognised since

Mr. Atherley Jones.

he came into the House, and who, they regretted, did not address the House more frequently, said—

> "If you are going to grant Home Rule, you must have two divisions. You must have Home Rule for Belfast, and Home Rule for the southern and western and midland parts of Ireland."

Did it never occur to the noble Lord that Canada was equally divided politically into two provinces, the French province and the British province? Did it never occur to the noble Lord that all the conditions of distinct nationalities existed in Canada a thousandfold as great as they were in Ireland. Yet the Dominion Act of 1867 was passed, and the Dominion Parliament—a local Parliament such as that which they would establish in Dublin—was established in the capital of Canada, and under that Government the French Catholics of the province of which Quebec was the capital, lived as contented and with the same satisfaction as Protestant Englishmen. He was sorry to hear the noble Lord speak about the possibility of dishonesty. The Chief Secretary was not present; but one of his representatives—the Minister for Agriculture—was, and he would confirm his statement that those poorest and most benighted districts in Ireland upon which the contumely of the hon. Member for North Belfast fell, kept up their payments regularly and honestly. One of the most splendid spectacles in relation to the people of Ireland had been the effort laudably attempted and loyally fulfilled of keeping the financial engagements into which they had entered. Speaking as an English Member for an English constituency, he would welcome the passage of a measure of Home Rule for Ireland. There were great social problems for which the people of this country were yearning, and yet the time of the House had been occupied not for weeks, not for months, but for years, on this idle and barren controversy. It would be an inestimable boon and blessing if they could release themselves from the burden which it was impossible under modern conditions successfully to bear, and thus enable them to address themselves to those questions so intimately affecting the material and moral interests of the people of this country. He had spent many years in the House of Commons, and he had always been loyal to the great cause of Home Rule. He honestly believed there was a little light shining in the sky, and a prospect of that measure of liberty which the Irish people desired shining upon them. He did not despair that it would be under the inspiration, and he hoped also by the physical act of the present Prime Minister, that they might realise that which a few years ago was a dream, then a hope, and now a possibility.

CAPTAIN DONELAN (Cork, E.) said he wished to speak on the Motion from the standpoint of an Irish Protestant. His words would be very few, because his hon. and learned friend had dealt with that aspect of the case in a very masterly manner. When once Home Rule for Ireland came prominently to the forefront as a pressing question of practical politics it was not in the least degree surprising, on the contrary, it was only to be expected, that the Unionist Party should set up every bogey that human ingenuity could devise in order to scare the English people. None of those bogeys was more diligently utilised, or had more effectively served the object in view, than the bogey of religious intolerance. Where people took the trouble to ascertain the truth such bogeys were set up in vain. Fortunately, the English people, as a rule, were somewhat better informed about Irish affairs than they used to be, and consequently, they were not so easily bamboozled. Nevertheless, many English people knew so little, and he was afraid cared less, about Ireland that they were easily caught by any catch-cry, and readily swallowed any rubbish that was uttered about the Irish people, more especially if that rubbish was dished up in fashionable drawing-rooms. For example, the catch-cry that Home Rule would mean Rome Rule had probably caused many a British vote to be cast against Home Rule which would otherwise have been cast in its favour, and there were doubtless many presumably sane people on this side of the Channel who even now firmly believed that the Protestants in Ireland would live in daily danger of the thumb-screw under a Home Rule Parliament. They had been told that sort of stuff so often that they naturally took it for granted that it must be so, and such people were generally either too indolent or too much occupied with other concerns to find out the actual facts for themselves. Ignorance of each other was the great barrier which stood between the British and the Irish nations, and it ought to be the steadfast and earnest aim of every well-wisher of either country to break down that barrier. With regard to the question of Catholic intolerance in Ireland upon the question of Home Rule perhaps few could speak with better knowledge than himself, for he happened to be one of those benighted Protestants in the South of Ireland who were the objects of such tender solicitude on the part of hon. Members above the gangway. Indeed, in his own person he afforded a singularly surprising example and a very shocking example of Catholic intolerance. His case might well appeal to the pity and compassion of the Unionist Party, because his Catholic fellow-countrymen had carried their persecution of him to such a cruel extreme as to return him on every occasion unopposed to represent, in this water-logged House of Commons, the division of the County of Cork in which he lived. The fact that the proportion of Catholics to Protestants in the County of Cork was over ten to one naturally made his case all the more serious; and, furthermore, another Protestant Member of the Nationalist Party had suffered similarly barbarous treatment in the next adjoining division of the County of Cork to his own. Moreover, he had some dozen colleagues in the Irish Party who had had equally painful experiences all through the Catholic districts of Ireland, from Cork to Donegal. He would like the House to consider for a moment the humiliating position occupied by the Protestant minority in Ireland compared with the commanding position occupied by Catholic minority in Great Britain. According to the last census, taken in 1901, Protestants in Ireland, including the Presbyterians and Methodists, numbered 1,086,000. His hon. and learned friend the Member for Waterford had already mentioned the fact that Ireland returned twenty-seven Protestant Members of Parliament. According to the same census the Catholics in Great Britain numbered 2,180,000, or something more than double the number of Protestants in Ireland. How many Catholics were sent to sit in this House by British constituencies? His hon. friend said there were five, but he thought there were only four. But whether the number was four or five it included his hon. friend the Member for the Scotland Division of Liverpool, who might fairly be said to represent Ireland in England. In the face of facts such as those, was it any wonder that Unionists should shudder to contemplate the fate that awaited forlorn Irish Protestants when they were placed under the heel of their Catholic oppressors? The charge of intolerance so persistently made in certain quarters against the Catholics of Ireland was a base and groundless charge, and he challenged any Member of the House to produce a single instance in which a Protestant in Ireland had suffered a disability of any sort or kind on account of his religion. It was a very good omen that the Orangemen of the North were gradually learning a lesson of religious toleration from the Catholics in the South of Ireland, and that the old aggressive spirit of ascendancy was slowly but surely dying out. Year by year it was becoming more difficult to kindle the smouldering embers of sectarian strife, and the beating of the Orange drum was no longer responded to with the same frantic frenzy as in the days gone by. From one end of Ireland to the other there were, happily, signs and tokens that it was the desire of Irishmen of every class and creed to live together in harmony and peace, and work together to promote the welfare of their country. All they asked for was to be given the chance, and why, in the name of commonsense, could not the great Liberal Government summon up sufficient courage to give them the chance?

*MR. BARRIE (Londonderry, N.) said the hon. and gallant Member for East Cork had informed the House that while there were several Protestant Members in the Nationalist Party, there were only four or five Catholic Members sent to Parliament by British constituencies.

He made no complaint in regard to that statement, but he challenged the deduction which the hon, and gallant Member drew from it. The deduction which Unionists drew from it was that the hon. Member's inclusion in the Nationalist Party was part of a skilful propaganda to have in the Party a select number of Protestants. Unionists had again and again tried to get as a Member of their party a Roman Catholic Unionist. They had not succeeded yet, but he believed they would ultimately. He could not help, when listening to the hon. Member for Waterford, contrasting his reception that afternoon with what he was accustomed to get in his earlier appearances before the present Parliament. They were aware that three courses were open to the hon. Member in fulfilment of his promise to his followers in Ireland, that within a week of the opening of Parliament they would have the Home Rule flag unfurled. It was open to the hon. Member to move a Home Rule Amendment to the Address. That was not done, and no explanation was offered as to why it was not done. The hon. Member could have introduced a Home Rule Bill, and have seen what support it would receive from the present Government. He had elected to take neither of these courses. He had chosen the safer, the less aggressive, and the more academic course of introducing that Parliamentary futility, a Home Rule Resolution. Unionists did not complain. The great difficulty they had to contend with at the last general election was the constant assertion that Home Rule was dead, and that it was not an issue before the electorate. He was happy in the knowledge that that could not be said again. They believed they had again to begin the old fight which was twice before carried successfully through, and he did not think the result would be different from what it was in 1886, and again in 1893. They were told sometimes that Ulster had wavered in its allegiance to the Unionist cause, but in the three elections which had taken place since the general election the Unionist majorities had been greatly increased. The Member for the Blackfriars Division of Glasgow had said that all the trouble in Ireland came from the landlord party. He thought as he listened that the hon. Member was not so well posted in his facts as usual. He was not there as a representative of the landlord party, and had never had any interest in land, but he was old enough to remember that since 1881 Irish landlords had suffered severely for any faults or shortcomings of their predecessors. Since 1881, there had been Land Courts in Ireland fixing fair rents, and gradually a great improvement had taken place, so that it was utterly beside the question to say that landlordism was the cause of any trouble in Ireland The Member for the Blackfriars Division had also assured the House that all the Members of the Labour Party were confirmed Home Rulers. He ventured to suggest that the hon. Member for the Blackfriars Division was really a great deal more of an Imperialist than he seemed to be aware of himself. He told the House that he was a Home Ruler because of the organisation which had been the means of bringing the Labour Members into the House. He remembered the time when, as the head of one of those great Labour organisations, the Member for the Blackfriars Division, finding himself out of sympathy with a large society over which he had been chief officer for many years, went down to Glasgow when the men had ventured to act in defiance of the instructions of the executive, and ordered them to return to their work, telling them that if they refused their strike pay would be cut off. They returned to work. He thought in that action the hon. Member showed consciously or unconsciously that he was an Imperialist of the best type. It was stated in the Resolution of the hon. and learned Member for Waterford the present system of government in Ireland was out of sympathy with the will of the people. He supposed that what was meant was that it was out of sympathy with the will of the United Irish League. He submitted, however, that the United Irish League had no right or mandate to speak for the people of Ireland. Writing to the *Freeman's Journal* in July, 1907, the hon. Member for East Tyrone pointed out that on the roll of membership of the United Irish League there were no landlords, few merchants, fewer Irish manufacturers, and few of the men who were managing the business of Ireland in city and town. In that connection he thought they were entitled to ask was that the kind of statement that was made when the United Irish League was seeking financial support in all ends of the earth? The hon. Member for Belfast preached in Australia that there had been a great change in Ireland, and that all classes were now united in asking that some form of Home Rule should be granted. He was in the House as one of the commercial representatives of Ulster to say that they stood now where they stood in previous times on this great issue. If that contention were disputed, he thought the statistics of recent elections amply confirmed the fact. He desired to adopt the words used by the Vice-President of the Board of Agriculture at Dungannon on 8th October, 1886. Although the hon. Member now sat on the opposite side of the House, he would ask that careful attention should be given to those words, because he had lived a good many years in Ireland before he uttered them and knew the position there as well as most men. The hon. Member said—

> "I have never doubted how the hon. Member or Cork would treat inconvenient minorities, and I now hold, firmer than I did before, that if the Protestants of Ireland ever place their civil or religious liberties at the mercy of the band of mercenaries who follow Mr. Parnell's lead, they will speedily and bitterly rue the transaction."

He thoroughly agreed with him, and it was only necessary to alter the leader's names. He would give another illustration. The hon. Member for Galway, writing recently in the *Daily Chronicle*, claimed greater powers in the proposed Council for Nationalists in order that they might the better be able to show generosity and justice to the Protestants, who would always have been in a minority in the Council. The Editor of the *British Weekly*, as a Nonconformist, replying to this argument said—

> "The hon. Member knows history. Will he tell us of a single instance where a Roman Catholic has given justice to a Protestant minority? We wait to hear."

He had carefully perused every issue of the *British Weekly* since that was published, and he had failed to find an answer from the hon. Member for Galway.

MR. GWYNN: The hon. Member has directly challenged me on this matter. I never saw the article he refers to. It is impossible for any man to read all the newspapers. I should have no hesitation in giving the illustration asked for.

MR. BARRIE said he had put on record the statement made by a largely-circulated Nonconformist periodical.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): We never heard of it before.

MR. BARRIE said he was sorry that the hon. Gentleman had never heard of it. As to the present composition of the Nationalist Party he would quote what was said in the *Irish People*, a publication edited by the hon. Member for the City of Cork. Over a year ago the hon. Member for Mid. Cork had a sudden punishment meted out to him because he had not conformed in some way to the behests of the Party. He resigned his seat and stood again, and the official Irish Parliamentary Party did not dare even to oppose him. During the contest the hon. Member for the City of Cork said—

> "Silly people who were ready to swallow any cry would no doubt be told that Mr. Sheehan was standing against the Irish Party and against majority rule. That cry was worthy of a party who could live only by falsehoods, and by the suppression of the truth from the country. The truth was the other way, for Mr. Sheehan was standing to save the great majority of the Irish Party and their nominal Leader from a secret despotism, which was reducing the name of that Party to an empty name and an object of derision in Ireland. The majority of the Irish Party had no more to do with the expulsion of Mr. Sheehan from the Irish Party than they had to do with the last eclipse of the sun. They knew no more about this outrage on Mr. Sheehan and the people of Mid Cork than even Mr. Sheehan himself until they read of it in the newspapers. To that hour the majority of the Irish Party knew as little as those he was addressing as to who were the secret conspirators who were yielding the power of life and death over their colleagues and themselves. The whole thing was done in guilty secret, and in some unknown star chamber, and the object of that Mid Cork election was to tear away that cloud of darkness, and let the party and the country know once and for all who were the guilty conspirators and by what right they claimed that

intolerable pretension to do what they liked with the liberties, and with the honour, and with the funds of the Irish Party. If they were to condone the treatment of Mr. Sheehan by those men, what was to prevent them next from striking at fifteen or twenty Members of the Irish Party whom they would just as gladly strike down without even the form of a trial? That was not majority rule, it was Thuggery rule, but from that day forth the men of Ireland were going to put it down. Mr. Sheehan was taking the only means of saving the Irish Party from secret tyrants, and from the conditions of ignominy and slavery in which they were at present lying, in terror of the men who had got hold of the Australian funds, which were really the beginning and end of all this trouble."

[Interruption from the Irish Benches.] He was quoting the words of one of the Members of the Irish Party, and he claimed he was entitled to introduce them during that debate. They had an interesting bearing on the question before them. As a Member of the Ulster Unionist Party he desired to associate himself with everything which had been said by the hon. Member for North Belfast in defence of the Irish Unionists. Everything that had occurred in recent years had justified their attitude, and they were determined to resist by every lawful means any attempt to hand them over to the tender mercies of the Irish Nationalist Party.

*MR. ELLIS (Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe) thought that the House had heard with great pleasure and satisfaction from the hon. Member for Cork that religious bigotry and animosity were hateful to the Irish people. He was sure that they all recognised the truth of the testimony of the hon. Member for Cork in his own person. That was the impression which he himself had received when he visited Ireland, and he believed that the facts and figures laid before the House by the hon. and learned Member for Waterford had laid that bogey to rest. The debate must have stirred the memories of all those who were in the House in the old days of the eighties. His right hon. friend the Chief Secretary had told them that it would be to the advantage of every Member of the House to read the debates on the Coercion Bill of 1887. He would supplement that by saying that in his humble judgment it would be to the advantage of every Member to read the debates on the great Home Rule Bill of 1886. Those were days indeed, in Mr. Parnell's phrase, of the battle of giants. He thought it would be admitted by anyone who looked over the last twenty years that since the introduction of that Home Rule Bill in 1886 there had been a great march in the movement towards Irish self-government. He thought that the Amendment moved by the noble Lord was somewhat belated, and that if the noble Lord would look into the history of his Party he would find that years ago they had moved a long way in front of his Resolution. The right hon. Member for West Birmingham used the following striking language on 12th March, 1887—

> "But when Mr. Gladstone introduced this tremendous measure, when he made this enormous concession to the Parnellite Party we felt, and we said—and no man said it more clearly than Lord Hartington—that the situation had been changed by his action, and that in future it would be useless to talk of measures which might have been sufficient before, and that we were bound to consider the matter now on a broader and wider standpoint, and with a view to make more extensive concessions, and accordingly our position was that while we were willing to agree in the future to the creation of some legislative authority in Dublin in accordance with Mr. Gladstone's principles, we could not consent, and would not consent to the scheme by which he proposed to carry this out so long as the safeguards] which Mr. Gladstone provided were in our opinion totally illusory and inadequate."

The same attitude was taken up in 1893–1894. The principle of a legislative authority in Dublin was conceded by both these distinguished men; but, they now had the noble Lord the Member for South Kensington adopting a negative *non possumus* attitude. The noble Lord had not attempted to grapple with the various assertions set forth in the Resolution of the Leader of the Irish Party. The case for Irish self-government could not be displaced as regarded cost, inefficiency, and the alienation of the sympathies of the people of Ireland, Let them take it whichever way they liked, the case stood not only where it did in 1886, but had been strengthened by what had happened during the last twenty years. He had read very carefully the speeches made by the hon. and learned Member for Waterford in various parts of Ireland in 1907, and he did not understand how anyone going through them could feel otherwise than that the position of the hon. Gentleman was abundantly justified. And that was strengthened by the illuminating notes of the hon. Member for Donegal. This Parliament had for generations been dealing with Ireland with a want of knowledge. The *fons et origo mali* was still want of knowledge of Ireland. No one had admitted that more specifically than the Leader of the Opposition. What did that right hon. Gentleman say in 1895 in regard to the treatment by this Parliament of Irish industries?—

> "There was a time, an unhappy time, when the British Parliament thought they were well-employed in crushing out Irish manufactures in the interest of the British producer. It was a cruel and it has proved to be a stupid policy."

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: Hear, hear. That was 160 years ago.

Mr. ELLIS said he was not challenging the right hon. Gentleman's consistency in the least; he was comparing instances. Though they might have got rid of the cruelty, they had not got rid of the stupidity. When he first entered Parliament he at once came face to face with the land question. He went over to Ireland and rode hundreds of miles over the country. He had piles of notebooks filled with observations on Irish land and Irish tenancy. He was amazed to find that the rental was taken in Ireland, and had been taken for long, from the person who created the value of the property and paid to persons who had contributed nothing to this value. They all knew that in this country the landlords created the buildings, executed the drainage, and so forth. In Ireland there was nothing of the kind. They might go over hundreds of thousands of acres where all the value of the property had been created by the tenants, and large villages where every house had been built by the tenants. On many a property the landlord had never spent £5 upon them. That was proved by the fact that in the Act of 1881 there was a special provision that English managed estates should be exempted from the operation of that Act, and that no advantage had been taken of that provision, the simple reason being that there were practically no such estates. There was another very striking thing about the Irish land question which was not often taken notice of. The tenant had a much longer hereditary connection with the land than the landlord. Many of them had been for generation after generation on the land, and new landlords had come on the scene, and had filched from the tenants all sorts of their ancient rights. The tenantry had been treated as a factor in adding rental value to the property, and where that could not be done they were swept away. That was the cause of the great evictions when the people were hurled off the land to the sea shore. In regard to the machinery of government in Ireland, where the treatment had not been cruel it had been stupid. The noble Lord did not refer to Lord Dunraven's striking book, in which he gave a catalogue of the administrative Boards in Ireland. He showed that the civil administration of Ireland consisted of no less than sixty-seven authorities. Ireland did not enjoy the advantages of our constitutional system, and she had not the advantages of an efficient despotism. She fell between the two schools. There had been some curious things happen during the last twenty years, to some of which he would call attention. He wished the noble Lord had let a little light into some of them. They started the twenty years with an interview between the then Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, Lord Carnarvon, in a house with Mr. Parnell and also the Prime Minister, but not one of his colleagues; then they had the Newport speech, which might be read to-day with very great advantage; and then they had later another Prime Minister, and he hoped that the Leader of the Opposition, who was going to speak, would give them a little information about the MacDonnell mystery. There was the right hon. Gentleman carrying on coercion for many years—and he never, apart from his policy, admired a man more for the unflinching vigour with which he carried it on—and then they had Mr. Gerald Balfour; and while the right hon. Gentleman was Prime Minister they had the curious incident of Sir Antony MacDonnell, and he initiated a new policy. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would give them a little information about these things if he spoke in that debate. There was rather a significant article in the *North American Review* in February, 1903, evidently written on authority, that the scheme then put forward was not only a scheme of financial but of political reform, and covered the whole scheme of devolution. Did anybody doubt that at the end of the period to which he had alluded, Ireland, taking it all over, had less sympathy and less appreciation of English rule than it had at the beginning? There might not, happily, be so much crime and so much disorder, but there was a movement growing in Ireland, even among Unionists, in the direction of some change being made, and as he listened to the hon. Member who had just sat down and remembered the way in which Colonel Saunderson presented it, he thought how the Unionist cause as regards force and vigour had fallen. The hon. Member for Waterford had alluded to the Irish representatives, and he thought they could not dwell upon that fact too strongly. Our system of government was based on the representative principle; they all claimed to come there as representing somebody; they were all nothing with themselves; they passed away, but their constituencies endured. But all through this time, whatever the fortunes of English parties, there had been more than eighty men from Ireland, all of whom represented more truly than some of them could say that Irish demand dealt with in the Resolution before them. This, it was foreseen, would be the case in 1884, when there occurred in the House a great debate on the Irish franchise. One of the most eloquent members—the last real Irish orator, Mr. Plunkett—pointed out that if they gave the franchise to the Irish peasant they would undoubtedly make it inevitable that the Nationalist Party would come up there with a great majority. So it had been. They had had a stream of men coming from Ireland who were entitled to be listened to. But, apart from that, he noticed a singular statement which fell not long ago from the late Solicitor-General who, he believed, went so far as to say that it was about time that the government of Ireland was left for Irishmen to deal with.

SIR E. CARSON (Dublin University) said that was not exactly what he had stated. He said that if the present course of government went on and did not afford protection to the Irish people the English Government had better clear out of Ireland.

*MR. ELLIS was glad to have extracted that statement. The present course of government included the Conservative Government.

SIR E. CARSON: No, the present Government.

*MR. ELLIS said of course he accepted the right hon. Gentleman's explanation. But in this connection he remembered very well the striking words used by Mr. Parnell in the great debate of 1886. He said—

> "We cannot give up a single Irishman; we want the energy, the patriotism, the talents, and the work of every Irishman to ensure that this great experiment shall be a successful one. The best system of government for a country I believe to be one which requires that that Government should be the resolution of all the forces within that country. I regard variety as necessary to the success of this trial. We want all creeds and all classes in Ireland. We cannot consent to a single Irishman as not belonging to us."

He was not sure that if Mr. Parnell had been in his place now he would not have claimed the right hon. Gentleman as being willing to work under his banner. He welcomed the Resolution; he believed it cleared the air. He believed that, after all, the sky was breaking, and that the Irish Nationalists and the English Members—because this was as much a question for them as for the Nationalist Members—might look forward to the time when the problem would be solved by giving to the Irish people the legislative and executive control of all purely Irish affairs. He should go with unhesitating alacrity into the lobby in support of the Resolution.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down expended the greater part of his speech in expounding to the House two flagrant instances of English misgovernment in Ireland. The first related to the Irish system of land tenure, under which, as everybody knows, it has been customary for the tenant to make the improvements—not a good system in my opinion, but a system which we on this side of the House—the party to which I belong, the Government of which I was a member—have done not only something to remedy, but eveything to remedy. What was tinkered at before by Radical Governments and Conservative Governments in the way of land purchase has been finally and conclusively settled by the Land Purchase Act, passed by my right hon. friend the Member for Dover, and what can be the relevance of a system of land tenure in Ireland which is remedied by legislation passed by this House to an argument which dicusses whether this House is capable of dealing with Irish problems utterly passes my comprehension. But I go further, and I ask: How, if Home Rule had passed, either in 1886 or 1893, could the lanc question have been settled? If it has been settled now, or if it is in the way of being settled now by the use of British credit and British capital—and does the right hon. Gentleman suppose that after his ideal is carried into effect, and there is in Dublin an independent Parliament with an executive responsible to it, it is likely that a British House of Parliament which has nothing whatever to do with Ireland except occasionally to coerce the representatives of Ireland in the management of Irish affairs—(that, I understand, is the theory)—how they would have dealt with the Irish land problem on just and sound lines without British credit behind them passes my comprehension, and the right hon. Gentleman forgot in the course of his speech to explain it. His other illustration, if he will allow me to say so, was, if possible, more unfortunate. He told us that he had driven many hundreds of miles on an outside car through Ireland—I am sure enjoying the lovely scenery and the kindly hospitality of its inhabitants—but he said he had discovered in the course of his investigations that there were no less than sixty-seven boards in Ireland.

MR. ELLIS said he took the sixty-seven boards from Lord Dunraven's book.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I beg pardon. That was not discovered on the outside car. But the right hon. Gentleman cannot have been in this House when the Chief Secretary for Ireland spoke this evening. The Chief Secretary for Ireland made a very interesting speech, to which I shall refer later, and in the course of that speech he had a long and interesting parenthesis, in which he re-made the speech which, by his own account, he ought to have made when he brought in the Irish Councils Bill last year. He indicated to the House that he, like the right hon. Gentleman, had been misled by Lord Dunraven in his book. He did not mention the name or the source, but he did mention the sixty-seven boards, and he said it was a very unfortunate argument to have used. He felt he had weakened his case by it, because these sixty-seven boards were now quite an illusory argument, and the whole justification of the abortive Bill of last year did not depend upon sixty-seven boards, but, I think, upon six—a percentage of diminution which my powers of mental arithmetic are unable at the moment to calculate, but which the right hon. Gentleman himself will admit is very large. So much for the two instances that the right hon. Gentleman mentioned. If I go back, leaving the right hon. Gentleman's speech, to a general survey of the debate, I have one or two general observations to make. The first is this, that it is clearly impossible to discuss the merits of Home Rule in the course of a debate which begins at four o'clock and ends, let us say, at half-past eleven. I remember on the Second Reading of Mr. Gladstone's Bill of 1893 we took a fortnight; or at least we had four days for the introduction and I do not know how many days for the Second Reading. Though in those days, as in these, there was occasional repetition in argument, still I am not making an extravagant statement when I say that it is impossible for any speaker, whatever his powers of compression may be, to deal, within the limits prescribed by the conditions under which we are discussing this question, with so vast a theme in any adequate fashion. The second observation I have to make, or the second question I put to myself, is whether we are engaged in a serious discussion at all? I confess that when I heard the hon. and learned Gentleman who initiated the debate make his speech, I felt, as I have always felt when he speaks to us, that he has strong convictions on this matter which he is as capable as any man in this House of expressing eloquently and effectively. But then, when I heard the reply of the Chief Secretary, I did not know whether I was assisting at a pre-arranged comedy between the Government and their friends on that side and their consistent and faithful supporters below the gangway, and whether, in fact, this was not a mere attempt to make the outside public believe that the Irish Nationalist Members were as interested as ever in the question of Home Rule, but tha hon. Gentlemen opposite were not to be driven into any unpleasant corner or compelled to make any unpleasant declarations, but were to have the same latitude of interpretation of their Home Rule declarations as they had enjoyed in the past. I had intended speaking on the merits, but—[Cries of "Go on."]—then you bring it on yourselves, and, if I am to survey, even in the briefest fashion the merits of the question, I must ask the indulgence of the House, though I shall not really travel outside the limits of to-day's debate. What said the Leader of the Irish Party? He gave his version of the arguments that had been used in favour of Home Rule, and said—

> "The whole situation is altered. There may have been strong arguments against Home Rule in 1886 and in 1893, but those arguments, which may have been strong then, have been destroyed since, and destroyed by the action of a Unionist Government."

What were his two arguments? The first was that you required to do justice in the matter of land. You had to do justice to Irish landlords as well as Irish tenants, and if Home Rule had been passed in 1886 or 1893 justice would not have been done. Justice will now be done because the Land Act of 1903 has been passed, and that question is in the way of solution. I am proud to have been a member of the Government which passed that Act; but, when it is suggested that it is inconsistent with Unionist policy, let me say that I had been an ardent advocate for years of that policy before I held office in this House at all. More than twenty years ago I seconded a Resolution on the subject of land purchase when I was in Opposition, and ever since then I have, in office and out of office, ardently advocated that policy, and it is absurd to say that we borrowed it from the hon. Member for Waterford and his friends. I believe the public man whose name was most identified in early life with it was Mr. Bright; but, whatever may have been the small beginnings of that policy, all that has been done of a great and effectual character has been done by us, all the great steps have been taken by us, and they have been absolutely consistent with the whole theory of Unionist administration. The second argument used by the hon. and learned Gentleman was that the opponents of Home Rule laid down the principle that Irishmen, *qua* Irishmen, were incapable of administering affairs, and that that argument had been entirely disposed of by the fact that a Unionist Government gave a full measure of local administration to Irish county councils. Local government in Ireland, again, has always been a part of Unionist policy.

MR. J. MACVEAGH: What did Lord Salisbury say at Newport?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: He certainly said nothing inconsistent with that. Long before the Irish Local Government Act passed, I and my friends have always said that privileges of that kind which you gave to England must be given to Ireland. They were not given to England, remember, until a Unionist Government gave them in 1888; and, as soon as they were given to England, then, in my opinion, it became absolutely necessary, right, and just that the same privileges should be given to Ireland; and they were given, not when a Radical Government came in, but when a Unionist Government again took office in 1895. Who has ever suggested that an Irishman is incapable of dealing with government? [A NATIONALIST MEMBER: Lord Salisbury.] I beg pardon. He did nothing of the kind. You have only to see the Parliamentary ability of hon. Members below the gangway—an ability which I have experienced, sometimes pleasurably and sometimes painfully, for the last thirty years—to know that Irishmen yield to no nation in the world in their

Parliamentary aptitudes. And I am delighted to learn what we have heard to-day—that the Irish county councils have shown great administrative ability, and have been a very creditable institution. As one of those who created that institution, am I expected to stand in a white sheet on that account? No, Sir, no one ever objected to Home Rule on the ground that Irishmen lacked the necessary ability to deal with questions of public policy; and no one suggested that the Irish county councils would fail in their duty except as far as they allowed their political prejudices to interfere. And I am afraid that, if the matter were inquired into impartially, it would be found that, so high does party feeling run in Ireland, and not on one side only, that you cannot count on county councils to appoint to places of emolument those best qualified to carry out the functions unless they share the political opinions of the majority. If that is the fact, surely it bears out the conclusion to which my noble friend, in his brilliant speech to-night, called attention—that if Ireland were left entirely to her own political resources she would be the scene of violent political faction fights in which the minority would fare very badly, the minority being in this case that section of the population which certainly has shown the greatest industrial aptitude. That is the only moral that can be drawn from the county councils; but surely it is enough. The Members of this House, three-fourths of whom do not remember the old debates on this subject, absolutely underrate the practical difficulties that would arise in menacing power directly any one tried to formulate Home Rule. Most of the Gentlemen whom I am addressing are new to this question. They have not had to face the difficulties in their concrete shape in a Bill. If they had they would see that such questions as those regarding the position of the Irish representatives and the relations of the two Exchequers are questions so incapable of solution that by themselves they would make any Government desiring to pass a practical Bill shrink from the colossal task. But behind all these questions, which may perhaps be regarded as questions of detail, there lies a far greater issue. I have heard the Leader of the Irish Party and his friends constantly talk of the analogy between Ireland as they would wish to see it and a British self-governing colony. Sir, there is no analogy. I remember an observation written twenty years before the Home Rule controversy began, in which the late Professor Freeman stated that there had been a vast number of cases in which a federal system had been created, but that in every case except one the federal system was an effort to draw together the parts of a great community which had become separated. It was a process of integration and not of disintegration. The one example he pointed to in the contrary sense was the case of the Germanic communities, which, in the early Middle Ages, were a relatively united nation, and which, through various historic stresses, gradually got broken up into semi-independent States. They had some kind of organic unity, but one which was ineffective, costly, and prolific of wars and friction—the very cause of all modern European difficulties. How has that process been reversed? Germany was united; it became disintegrated; it has been united again by blood and iron. And it is only by blood and iron, when this kind of disintegration has been allowed to proceed, that you can reunite elements which should never have been allowed to separate. The whole tendency of modern times is the creation of great States and communities. That is the process of integration. The whole of the relationship to our Colonies, whether this plan or that plan be good, is that every statesman and every Party is desirous of producing a new state of things in which the union of the Colonies shall be closer. If you give Home Rule to Ireland, a superficial observer may say that you are placing Ireland in a position like that of a Colony. The true observer sees that you are reversing in the case of Ireland the very process which you are trying to carry out in every other part of the Empire. Instead of aiming at the integration of the great British Empire you are doing something towards its disintegration; and as for telling me that there is any analogy between the case of Ireland—which is, at least, fully represented in a free Assembly—and the case of those communities beyond the sea, which some dreamers may have thought we could manage from Downing Street without representative institutions of their own, I say that there is no analogy at all, and to quote a British colony in this connection appears to me to show an utter ignorance of the essential and fundamental difference. I apologise to the House even for this ten minutes on the merits. I do so, because I do not feel that it is the merits of the question that are interesting to-night. What is really interesting to-night is not what we on these benches think. Every one knows what we think. Nor is the interesting problem by what arguments we support our convictions, because it is an abstract Resolution not having the force of a Bill, and we are at liberty to reserve our arguments until a Bill is brought in by a responsible Government. The really interesting and important problem to-night is not what we think or why we think it, nor what the hon. Members below the gangway think. We want to know what the Government think. The right hon. Gentleman who preceded me said that he rejoiced in this Resolution because it would clear the air. Has it cleared the air? We have still to hear the speech of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and no one is a greater master of clear exposition. He may make it clear; but has it been cleared so far? I listened to the characteristic speech of the Chief Secretary, and I do not think he will pretend that he cleared the air. I remember that he gave us a speech full of the most luminous *obiter dicta* on all sorts of questions—the late lamented Devolution Bill, the condition of Irish land purchase, and other pressing problems. But on the question of Home Rule he told us nothing about the attitude of the Government as a Government, or of the Radical Party as a Party. His nearest approach to a specific utterance, as far as I remember, was in words like these, "Speaking for myself," he said—not for his friends, not for his followers; he did not say, "I am in favour of a Parliament in Dublin, or of an Executive responsible to that Parliament," but, "Speaking for myself, I am in favour of a Parliament which can give constant attention to Irish questions." He illustrated that rather cryptic reference by saying in what an embarrassment he was with regard to land purchase in Ireland. He said that there is a land purchase question which is in a state of great confusion. The Act of 1903 was a great Act, but in order to make it work, you ought to have a Parliament which is constantly devoting itself to the subsidiary problems that necessarily come in the train of a great statute. How is an Irish Parliament going to deal with land purchase in Ireland? Is land purchase going to be carried out by Irish money? It is going to be carried out by British money. And when the right hon. Gentleman looks forward to a devolution of our responsibilities in the matter of land purchase to an Irish Parliament, is he going to give the Irish Parliament a free hand in dealing with British credit and British money? Are we to be excluded from any say in that matter, or is that to be the prerogative entirely of hon. Gentlemen below the gangway? And if we who provide the money are to have something to say to the policy, how are we to be relieved by a dozen Parliaments in Ireland? The truth is that the right hon. Gentleman neither in his speech to-night, nor in his speech on Thursday, nor, so far as I know, in any speech he has yet made, has dealt with any Irish question which does not require the use of English money. "If I could only get the money, there is nothing I would not do for Ireland," says the right hon. Gentleman. "I have a great plan, a great reform. British money is required." How is that going to be cured by Home Rule, unless, indeed, as some cynics have suggested, Home Rule is another plan for gradually increasing at the general taxpayers' cost the expense of Irish government? Otherwise how are these great reforms with British money to be carried out except by the British Parliament? Clearly there is no conceivable method; and I could wish the right hon. Gentleman, when dealing in his airy and delightful manner with the pressing problem of Irish government, had chosen questions as illustrating the necessity for Home Rule which do not so palpably involve the use or misuse of British credit. That is all we have as yet had from the Government in the way of an expression of their convictions. I thought myself when I came down that Home Rule was a question which had been so thoroughly threshed out on two occasions by the British Parliament, that there was no argument one way or the other, no plan for dealing with the objections which had not been canvassed and re-canvassed a hundred times—in other words, that the problem of Irish Home Rule was no new question. Fiscal reform may be thought to be a new question in the last few years, but Home Rule is an old question upon which every argument has been thoroughly examined and weighed. I should have thought every Gentleman with this opportunity of weighing and estimating every argument would have formed a conclusion upon it. That is not the position of the Chief Secretary. He told us he was an eager Home Ruler, and ended by making an appeal to the Irish Gentlemen below the gangway to deal frankly with the House and say what it was they wanted.

Mr. BIRRELL: Not with the House, but with the electorate.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not know that from this point of view we could distinguish between the two. I am aware that hon. Gentlemen may feel that there is sometimes a distinction between the House and the electorate, but in this connection what distinction can there be? The right hon. Gentleman appears to suppose that the hon. Gentlemen below the gangway have been wanting in clearness. I have had many controversies with hon. Gentlemen below the gangway, but on this subject they have been lucidity itself. They have never left us in the smallest doubt as to what they wanted. There may be doubt as to what their requests, if granted, will ultimately lead to. That I think is extremely doubtful, and they are not masters of that situation. What they want, at all events for the present, has been made absolutely clear. It was made clear by Mr. Parnell; it has been made clear by each one of the Gentlemen who have spoken with the authority of the Irish representation. When the Chief Secretary comes down and asks the Irish to deal frankly with the Radical Party and tell them what they want, it does seem to me the most amazing part ever played by a responsible Government to a section of their supporters. Remember, the present occupants of the Treasury Bench are not in a position to say, "We have promised not to deal with this question in the course of the present Parliament; we do not know what is going to happen in the present Parliament, and we must wait till the situation arises before we say what we shall do in the new circumstances." Some people may say that; they cannot. I remember when they occupied many nights in the two or three years that preceded the last general election in denouncing in every mood and tense, in every key, the iniquities of the then occupants of the Treasury Bench, because they did not produce a full-blown project of fiscal reform. It was admitted on all hands that that Parliament could not deal with the subject. That did not content them. They said, "It is quite true you cannot deal with it, but you must tell us the plan on which you mean to go to the country." I do not know that that request was a very reasonable one, but at all events those who made it cannot object to our asking what they mean to go to the country on with regard to Home Rule. Home Rule no doubt involves enormous difficulties and a prodigious revolution, but it is an old question, a question on which the Radical Party made up their mind twenty-two years ago, and on which they showed that they had neither forgotten anything nor learned anything fifteen years ago. They have had fifteen years to meditate on it. They had all the debates of 1886 and 1892 of which they might chew the cud, and then the right hon. Gentleman——

Mr. BIRRELL: I know what I mean.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The right hon. Gentleman has been singularly unsuccessful in explaining it if he does know what he means. If he knew what he meant why did he appeal to hon. Gentlemen below the gangway to tell him what they meant? Do they mean something different by Home Rule? Has Home Rule two meanings—a Radical meaning, which the right hon. Gentleman represents, and an Irish meaning, which the

Member for Waterford represents? Are there two kinds of Home Rule? [" No."] If there is only one kind, why did the right hon. Gentleman appeal to the Irish Party for instruction, information, and guidance? The right hon. Gentleman ended his speech by an appeal to what he called the long and honourable connection of his Party with the Home Rule cause. The connection certainly has been long. It is not for me to say that it has been otherwise than honourable. But let me ask exactly what it is. At the end of 1885 Mr. Gladstone came in with a not very big majority, a large number of whom were hostile to Home Rule, and attempted unsuccessfully to carry a Home Rule Bill. He repeated that experiment a few years later with a small majority under circumstances of extraordinary difficulty, and he repeated the attempt with a courage and an ability which even those who differed from him most violently were glad to recognise. Fifteen years of meditation passed and the Home Rule Party came into power, not with a divided majority as in 1885, not with a small majority as in 1886, not with a small majority as in 1892, but with the largest majority of which the history of the British Parliament gives us the record; and these Gentlemen, after their long and honourable connection with the cause of Home Rule, believing, as they are going to say to-night when they vote for this Resolution, that it is not only good for Ireland, but good for Scotland and for England; believing, in other words, that it still stands as it did in 1886 and 1893; believing that it stands in the forefront, not of a mere local reform admirable for Ireland, but indifferent to the other parts of the United Kingdom; believing, as they think, that it is a reform intimately bound up with the prosperity of every part of the United Kingdom—these Gentlemen have so arranged their business, have perhaps so contrived their electoral programme, have so lavished their electoral promises, that they find the majority which perhaps alone could deal with this question evaporating before their eyes, vanishing before they are able to strike a single blow in favour of that cause with which they have been so long and so honourably connected. I honestly think that the Chancellor of the Exchequer when he rises immediately to reply to me will put an end to this ambiguous state of things. If he elects to say—as he will be justified in saying: " I am a Home Ruler, I am in favour of that policy, I have spoken and voted for it, but I recognise that under modern conditions it cannot be carried out, and I therefore abandon it," no one could say that is either dishonourable or ambiguous. It may be statesmanlike; it may be right. If he elects to get up and say: " I always have been a Home Ruler, I am still a Home Ruler, and when the general election comes I will not repeat the tactics of the last election; I will not set up all these imaginable barriers between myself and this great remedial policy of Home Rule for England, Scotland, or Ireland; I will make Home Rule the first constructive plank in our programme," that also is unambiguous; it is statesmanlike, it is clear, and we know where we are. But if he contents himself, like the Chief Secretary for Ireland, with a nebulous exposition of things in general, with a statement of his own ardent connection with the cause, and his desire to see it carried out, and without any statement of the policy of the Party to which he belongs and of which at this moment he is in fact the leader, then he is open, not merely to the charge which he, with very little reason, was pleased to level against me in the last Parliament on another question, but to the charge that it is impossible to repudiate that he is playing with a great issue and with a great cause—he is leading on his Irish followers below the gangway with false hopes and illusory expectations, and he is keeping open with all its attendant evils a great constitutional question which it is to the interests of every part of the United Kingdom should soon be settled one way or the other.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. ASQUITH, Fifeshire, E.): I agree with the right hon. Gentleman that it is quite impossible in the short space of time allocated to a debate of this kind to survey in all its aspects the question of Home Rule. I shall not attempt to do so, nor shall I attempt to follow the right hon. Gentleman into a part of his argument which is open, I think, to a good deal of obvious criticism, in which he claimed for himself and the Party to which he belongs something in the nature of a monopoly in regard to beneficent legislation for land purchase and local government in Ireland. Those who remember the history either of the one question or of the other will know how to appraise properly the value of his claim. But the right hon. Gentleman has not been content with making his own speech; he has been good enough to sketch out for me the speech which he thinks I ought to make. I am very much obliged to him, but, although I hope when I sit down I shall not be open to the charge of nebulousness or obscurity, I am going to make my own speech after my own fashion. The right hon. Gentleman appears to think that, while he and his Party in this matter occupy a clear and unequivocal position, and while the same may be said of the followers of the hon. Member for Waterford who sit below the gangway, we here, and we on this bench in particular, find ourselves to-night in a position of considerable embarrassment. Well, I have had a somewhat prolonged experience in this House, and I will at once relieve the kindly solicitude of the right hon. Gentleman by informing him that never in the whole course of that experience have I felt less embarrassed than I do to-night. For twenty years, for more than twenty years, I and many of my colleagues whom I see sitting around me here have steadily and consistently voted, time after time, for propositions which, while explicitly safeguarding the supreme and indefeasible authority of this Imperial Parliament, have declared that the ultimate solution of the Irish problem can only be found in a system of self-government in regard to purely local affairs. From that opinion I have never receded, and I hold it just as strongly to-night as ever I did. How then do we stand, those who have acted in the past as I and many of my colleagues have done, how do we stand on this question? That is the question I am going to ask in the very few minutes in which I shall trespass on the attention of the House. How do we stand first of all in regard to the Motion of the hon. Member for Waterford, and next in regard to the Amendment of the noble Lord. Shall I say at once, and I hope there is no ambiguity here, I could not vote for the Motion of the hon. Member for Waterford in the form in which it at present stands. Why? Because I find in it no explicit recognition of what to my mind has always been the governing condition in regard to this matter—Imperial supremacy. The hon. Gentlemen said in his speech that any such addition was unnecessary; I do not agree with him. I quite accept his assurance as to the sense in which his Motion is intended; but I can remember Motions, not of a similar character, but in the same direction, made in the years gone by in this House in which a claim was put forward for an independent Irish Parliament, Motions which were strenuously resisted by Sir William Harcourt, and against which Sir William Harcourt and all of us went into the lobby. In my opinion the recognition of the claim of Ireland for self-government must be accompanied by the express statement that whatever is granted must be granted subject to the dominant and paramount supremacy of this Imperial Parliament. That defect, the cardinal defect of the Motion of the hon. and learned Member for Waterford, would be set right by the acceptance of the Amendment which my hon. friend the Member for Walthamstow has placed on the Paper. Furthermore, and here again I hope there will be no ambiguity, I could not vote for the Motion of the hon. and learned Gentleman if it were intended, or could be construed as being intended, to declare it to be the duty of the present Parliament to set up, or to begin to set up, in Ireland a legislative or executive system. I say that for two very obvious reasons. In the first place, I do not think any House of Commons in these days would be justified in embarking upon such a task, unless the matter had been, I will not say the leading, but, at any rate, one of the leading issues submitted to the electorate by which that House of Commons was returned. That, obviously, was not the case in the General Election of 1905. In the next place, many of us, including, I am not ashamed to say, myself, are under an express and deliberate pledge to our constituencies and the country. The right hon. Gentleman in the concluding passages of his speech actually went the length of taunting us as if we were prepared to violate those pledges. [OPPOSITION Cries of "No."]

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I really did not suggest that. I did suggest that you ought never to have made them.

MR. ASQUITH: That may have been the right hon. Gentleman's intention; but I do not think that was the effect his words produced on the House. The reason why we gave those pledges was perfectly simple and distinct. We were engaged upon one of the greatest struggles in which this country has ever engaged—a struggle on behalf of free trade. [AN HON. MEMBER: Chinese Slavery.] We saw, or we thought we saw, the very foundations of the industrial and commercial supremacy of this country exposed to a menacing and formidable danger. We believed that in the permanent interests of the nation, it was all important that in such a crisis the forces of free trade should be concentrated in defence of our fiscal system. The right hon. Gentleman says we were not justified in giving the pledges to which I have referred. I can understand that coming from the right hon. Gentleman. His degree of attachment—the warmth, lukewarmth, or coldness of his attachment—to free trade was at the time one of the most speculative problems in the whole domain of politics. I therefore quite understand the right hon. Gentleman's not appreciating our position. But to those to whom free trade was the great, the vital, the dominating issue, nothing could be more natural or more proper than that we should strive to concentrate, so far as we could, the support of the whole contry upon the side of that issue. That being so, it would have been inexcusable on our part, having regard to the promise upon which the votes of the electorate were obtained, were we to take any steps during the lifetime of the present Parliament to set up a system of Home Rule in Ireland. The utmost that could be done, consistently with the promise and assurances we gave, we attempted to do last year in the Irish Council Bill. That Bill—I will not discuss it now—was not inconsistent with further changes of a constitutional kind, but it did not involve them as a necessary practical effect or logical consequence. I think myself that it would have brought great financial and administrative benefit to Ireland, and that in its working it would have stimulated British opinion in favour of a larger measure of devolution. But by, as I think, an unhappy conjuncture of circumstances we were obliged to drop it, and so far as the present Parliament is affected, we have exhausted our powers with regard to the problem of Irish government. I hope I have made myself clear upon that point. Let me pass now for a moment to the Amendment of the noble Lord the Member for Kensington. I shall vote against that Amendment without hesitation for two reasons. In the first place, I shall vote against it because it attacks and, by implication, attributes to us here a position which was never held by Mr. Gladstone or by any of his colleagues. That Amendment assumes that there is a policy—a policy formulated by somebody, a policy supported by so much authority that it ought to be expressly repudiated by the House of Commons—of setting up in this United Kingdom two coordinate or indeed independent Parliaments. Mr. Gladstone never proposed anything of the kind. Whether as in the case of one of the Bills by a reservation of powers, or in the case of the other by enumeration of delegated powers, Mr. Gladstone always made it perfectly clear and distinct—and his words stand on record in a hundred speeches—that whatever legislative powers were given to the Irish Assembly should be exercised in subordination to and not in co-ordination with this Parliament. I have another and even stronger objection to the Amendment of the noble Lord, and it is this—that in so far as it is not, as I think it is, an empty phrase, it is a perfectly barren negation. The noble Lord's Amendment implies either, as my right hon. friend the Chief Secretary said, that the present system of Irish Government calls for no fundamental change (an opinion which none of us on this side, I believe, maintains), or else it implies, by its assertion of an undivided responsibility in the Imperial Parliament for legislation and administration in regard to Ireland—the word is "undivided" and not "ultimate"—that amelioration is not to be sought in the direction of developing Irish self-government; in other words, as I say, in the growing association of power and responsibility. The right hon. Gentleman told us in one part of his speech that this movement for what is called Home Rule was not only not analogous with, but was directly contrary to, the development of free institutions in our colonies. He used the word integration. He said the one movement was of integration, and this was a movement of disintegration. Could there be a greater, a more real, a more fundamental disintegration than at present exists between Ireland and the Imperial Parliament? Is it not really playing with words——because you do not adopt the same method of arriving at your end when the end is the same, when the object in both cases is to assure loyalty, contentment, and unity, by drawing together the members for the centre through giving greater freedom and larger autonomy to the members in matters that concern only themselves, whether you apply that process to a colony 10,000 miles away or to a country separated only by a few miles? The spirit, the object, and, as we believe, the result are the same; and let me add this for myself and I think I may speak for a great many other people, I have always regarded what is called Home Rule in Ireland as part and parcel—a most urgent part, I agree, in point of both policy and time—of a more comprehensive change. The constitutional problem—I am not sure it is not the gravest of all the constitutional problems of the immediate future—is to set free this Imperial Parliament for Imperial affairs, and in matters purely local to rely more and more on local opinion and local machinery. Ireland is by far the most urgent case. There is to-day, as there has been for centuries, the one undeniable failure of British statesmanship. Nowhere else in the Empire is there a deeper or more unfailing reservior on which we draw for the arts both of peace and of war; and yet nowhere else in the Empire is there so widespread and fertile a breeding-ground of perennial discontent. I do not profess to foresee the precise steps and stages by which the goal will be reached. [OPPOSITION cheers.] Some wiseacres opposite may think that they can. I have always thought and I think every year, the more experience I have of the actual working both of legislation and administration in this House, the goal itself is certain and inevitable. Are we to go on—I make this appeal even to the strongest Unionist I see opposite—are we to go on, generation after generation, treading with blind steps the same old well-worn hopeless track which zig-zags between coercion and conciliation, and which always returns in a vicious circle to the point from which it started? Or—for this is the only alternative—shall the British people, because they have got to be convinced, we all recognise that; and, until they are convinced, you cannot travel an inch on the road—shall the people of this country be brought, as in time I both hope and believe they will, to a higher and wider point of view, and taught, as they ought to be by their own long and world-wide experience, to recognise that in Ireland, as elsewhere, it is in the union of Imperial supremacy with local autonomy that the secret and the safeguard of our Empire is to be found?

*MR. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.): Mr. Gladstone is dead, the Prime Minister is stricken, and we are left to deal with the Chancellor of the Exchequer. I am sorry that the task of winding-up this debate on behalf of the Irish Party has been allotted to me, because my connection and touch with that Party has not been as close of late as I could have wished. But if I speak for myself, I believe that I shall also speak for the Irish nation, and I have to say that if the right hon. Gentleman supposes that by the attitude he has assumed to-night he will commend himself either to the Irish nation or, as I conceive, to the English nation, he is much mistaken. I do not know to which section of the Liberal Party the Chancellor of the Exchequer looks for strength or support. I do not know whether it is the section which was intimately represented in the case of the recent meeting at Lord Rosebery's, or whether it is to the section with which we have been largely in sympathy, but I would like to put this question to the Liberal Party. You have it stated to-night that the Irish cause—the cause to which Gladstone devoted his life, and upon which he imperilled his fame—was submerged at the late general election by the question of free trade. May I ask the right hon. Gentleman—What is to be the question at the next general election? Is there to be no question of free trade at the next general election? Or is it probable that the Tory Party, which three years ago, at all events, was riven and stricken by many divisions, will not push their advantage by the encouragement they have got at recent elections, and that they will not come forward with a still firmer sword in hand and demand the solution of that great fiscal problem which they have constantly agitated? If that be so, and if free trade cleaned the slate of Ireland—I believe "cleaned the slate" is the expression—at the last election, I wonder what figure poor Ireland will cut in the political geography of the hustings at the next election. On an important occasion of this kind, might I remind the right hon. Gentleman that upon another occasion he was put up to speak for his Party on a matter closely affecting the concerns of our people, namely, the question of amnesty. My friend Mr. Justin McCarthy then summed up his metallic speech by stating that he had closed the gates of mercy with a clang. Those gates were opened to us by the Tory Party within twelve months. [AN HON. MEMBER: Two years.] Well, within two years. The hon. Gentleman is a better statistician than I am. Within two years every man for whom we pleaded for mercy, for whose case we assailed the ears of the English people, had been discharged by the new Government which was not afraid to show more sympathy with Irishmen than the right hon. Gentleman opposite. The right hon. Gentleman wishes apparently to take low ground again to-night, and I do not desire, speaking with a sense of responsibility, to do more than to take note of his observations. In this House our Party is separate and is independent. Since the days I gave in my allegiance to Mr. Gladstone's policy twenty-two years ago, I have never believed in the tactics merely of independent opposition for Ireland I believe in a policy of independent friendship, and that our Party should be ready as long as it is fairly met, to co-operate with either section in this House. We are not partisans of one Party or the other; we are the ambassadors of a nation. Having to meet the speech of the right hon. Gentleman, which has held out to us no hope—[MINISTERIAL cries of "Oh, oh!"]—of effective or immediate action, preceded as it was by the speech of the Chief Secretary, who asks us to formulate our measures, I think I should not be blamed by even the most zealous follower of Liberalism, if I stated that we had ground to feel profound disappointment. That was the impression at all events, which such words and the speech of the new Leader of the Liberal Party caused in my mind. Accordingly, let me say this: we are accustomed in Ireland to disappointments. For centuries we have been battling, but never have you wrung from us one note or accent of surrender. We took your Council Bill of last year; we tore it into fragments. We listened to your paltering promises of to-day, and we tell you we shall carve our own future. There were greater men than the Chancellor of the Exchequer who came in conflict with us. True we have no skill. We have no force behind us, except that of sincerity, tenacity, and determination. Yet it is not we who need flinch before the prospect that seems opening. In saying this I wish to add one word. Speaking as an Irish Nationalist, I say we are not the enemies of the English people. Our motives have been impugned; our lives have been searched. We have been put by this Party (pointing to the Front Opposition Benches) to the most terrible ordeal to which men were ever put when indicted on a forged letter, and dragged without a jury in a strange venue before three hostile judges. Our careers were arraigned; our charcters were assailed, and our fortunes imperilled, and the only thing I regret about it is that our advocate was the Chancellor of the Exchequer. [MINISTERIAL cries of "Oh," and "Withdraw."] It was upon Ireland that the right hon. Gentleman first came into notice. [MINISTERIAL cries of "Oh," and "No."] To-day he is an important man To-morrow he may be a god, but we Irishmen will not worship at his shrine. I do not know whether the right hon. Gentleman spoke his own personal sentiments, or whether he spoke with a full sense of Cabinet responsibility; but, if I am to assume that he did so, I believe that his words will provoke a very disheartening echo in Ireland. He tells us that her case is urgent. When is it to be met? At what stage will the Liberal Party address themselves to it? At what stage will the right hon. Gentleman bring his enthusiasm, his well-known enthusiasm to bear? At what moment of time are the Irish Members to present their plans to the right hon. Gentleman? At what moment are we to get a hearing from him? Is it to be a public hearing, or is it to be a private hearing? Is it to be on the eve of the elections or at his official leisure? And then, I suppose, when deputies from this side have approached the right hon. Gentleman and come to an agreement, we are to state to the electorate that the Liberal Party and ourselves are at one on this question! Is that the way a great cause is to be carried? Is that the way Mr. Gladstone addressed himself to the question? Ah! believe me, the question of the fair treatment of Ireland would be as good a card to play at the polls as the policy of the Licensing Bill. I state only my own opinion; I state it with regret, that the right hon. Gentleman's speech, has marked a most deplorable retrogression. We are entitled to know when you ask us for our plan what is yours? You represent an Empire; we, forsooth, only represent a province. You represent an Imperial people; we represent what you style a subject race. You have official assistance, official experience, official prestige, and is it at the feet of the representatives of poor peasants, of men whom you had in your gaols only yesterday, and some of whom are there to-day—is it at their feet that you are going to learn skill, experience, and statesmanship? No, I believe that the right hon. Gentleman has taken a downward and backward course. I do not believe that the right hon. Gentleman has improved his personal position, and I am sure that he has not improved our relationship with the Liberal Party. The Irish Members will go forward in their own way. Ireland was told during the late Parliament to have heart and hope. Where have these hopes been dashed to, or when are they to be realised? It is ill wearing the stones of a foreign legislature; it is ill climbing another man's stairs; it is ill to be at Westminster for twenty-eight years as I and some of my hon. friends have been, eating out our hearts and finding that our tears do not even rust our chains. The right hon. Gentleman has given the Irish Members small encouragement for the future. He gave Ireland the Council Bill; it has been rejected. The Irish Members were frank with him, then and I will be frank with the right hon. Gentleman to-night. I tell the right hon. Gentleman that the Irish race, arrayed in determination, behind their representatives will yet hew a pathway to Irish freedom.

Question put, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

The House divided :—Ayes, 334; Noes, 142. (Division List No. 59.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Agnew, George William
Alden, Percy
Ambrose, Robert
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Asquith, Rt.Hn.Herbert Henry
Astbury, John Meir
Atherley-Jones, L.
Baker, Sir John (Portsmouth)
Baker, Joseph A. (Finsbury,E.)
Balfour, Robert (Lanark)
Baring, Godfrey (Isle of Wight)
Barlow, Sir John E.(Somerset)
Barnard, E. B.
Barnes, G. N.
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Barry,RedmondJ.(Tyrone,N.)
Beale, W. P.
Belloc, Hilaire Joseph Peter R.
Benn,Sir J.Williams(Devonp'rt
Benn,W.(T'w'r Hamlets,S.Geo.
Bennett, E. N.
Berridge, T. H. D.
Bertram, Julius
Bethell,SirJ.H.(Essex,Romf'rd
Birrell, Rt. Hon. Augustine
Boland, John
Bottomley, Horatio
Boulton, A. C. F.
Bowerman, C. W.
Brace, William
Bramsdon, T. A.
Branch, James
Bryce, J. Annan
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burke, E. Haviland-
Burns, Rt. Hon. John
Burt, Rt. Hon. Thomas
Buxton,Rt.Hn. Sydney Charles
Byles, William Pollard
Cameron, Robert
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Causton,Rt.Hn.RichardKnight
Channing, Sir Francis Allston
Cherry, Rt. Hon. R. R.
Churchill, Rt. Hon. Winston S.
Clancy, John Joseph.
Cleland, J. W.
Clough, William
Clynes, J. R.
Cobbold, Felix Thornley
Collins,Sir Wm.J.(S.Pancras,W
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Cooper, G. J.
Corbett,C.H.(Sussex,EGrinst'd
Cornwall, Sir Edwin A.
Cotton, Sir H. J. S.
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, Sir William Randal
Crooks, William
Crosfield, A. H.
Crossley, William J.
Cullinan, J.
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies,David(Montgomery Co.
Davies, Ellis William (Eifion)
Davies, Timothy (Fulham)
Delany, William
Devlin, Joseph
Dickinson,W. H.(St.PancrasN.
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dillon, John
Dobson, Thomas W.
Duckworth, James
Duffy, William J.
Duncan, C. (Barrow-in-Furness
Duncan, J. H. (York, Otley)
Dunne,Major E.Martin(Walsall
Edwards, Clement (Denbigh)
Elibank, Master of
Ellis, Rt. Hon. John Edward
Erskine, David C.
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Esslemont, George Birnie
Evans, Sir Samuel T.
Everett, R. Lacey
Farrell, James Patrick
Fenwick, Charles
Ferens, T. R.
Ferguson, R. C. Munro
Ffrench, Peter
Fiennes, Hon. Eustace
Findlay, Alexander
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Foster, Rt. Hon. Sir Walter
Fuller, John Michael F.
Fullerton, Hugh
Furness, Sir Christopher
Gill, James (Harrow)
Gilhooly, James
Gill, A. H.
Gladstone,Rt.Hn.Herbert John
Glen-Coats,Sir T. (Renfrew,W.)
Glover, Thomas
Gooch, George Peabody (Bath)
Greenwood, G. (Peterborough)
Grey, Rt. Hon. Sir Edward
Gulland, John W.
Gurdon,Rt.Hn.SirW.Brampton
Gwynn, Stephen Lucius
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Hall, Frederick
Halpin, J.
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Lewis
Hardy, George A. (Suffolk)
Harmsworth,R.L.(Caithn'ss-sh
Harrington, Timothy
Hart-Davies, T.
Harwood, George
Haslam, Lewis (Monmouth)
Hayden, John Patrick
Hazleton, Richard
Healy, Timothy Michael
Hemmerde, Edward George
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Henderson,J.M.(Aberdeen,W.)
Henry, Charles S.
Herbert, Col. Sir Ivor (Mon.,S.)
Higham, John Sharp
Hobart, Sir Robert
Hogan, Michael
Holland, Sir William Henry
Holt, Richard Durning
Horniman, Emslie John
Horridge, Thomas Gardner
Howard, Hon. Geoffrey
Hudson, Walter
Hyde, Clarendon
Idris, T. H. W.
Illingworth, Percy H.
Isaacs, Rufus Daniel
Jackson, R. S.
Jardine, Sir J.
Jenkins, J.
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Jones,Sir D.Brynmor (Swansea
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jordan, Jeremiah
Jowett, F. W.
Joyce, Michael
Kavanagh, Walter M.
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kelley, George D.
Kennedy, Vincent Paul
Kettle, Thomas Michael
Kilbride, Denis
Laidlaw, Robert
Lamb, Edmund G. (Leominster
Lardner, James Carrige Rushe
Law, Hugh A. (Donegal, W.)
Leese,Sir Joseph F.(Accrington
Lehmann, R. C.
Lever, A. Levy (Essex,Harwich

Lever, W. H. (Cheshire, Wirral)
Levy, Sir Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, Rt. Hon. David
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
Lupton, Arnold
Lyell, Charles Henry
Macdonald, J. R. (Leicester)
Macdonald, J.M. (Falkirk B'ghs)
Mackarness, Frederic C.
Maclean, Donald
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
Macpherson, J. T.
MacVeagh, Jeremiah (Down, S.
MacVeigh, Charles (Donegal, E.)
M'Callum, John M.
M'Crae, George
M'Kean, John
M'Kenna, Rt. Hon. Reginald
M'Killop, W.
M'Micking, Major G.
Maddison, Frederick
Mallet, Charles E.
Manfield, Harry (Northants)
Mason, A. E. W. (Coventry)
Masterman, C. F. G.
Meagher, Michael
Meehan, Francis E. (Leitrim, N.
Meehan, Patrick A. (Queen's Co.
Menzies, Walter
Micklem, Nathaniel
Mond, A.
Money, L. G. Chiozza
Mooney, J. J.
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Morley, Rt. Hon. John
Morrell, Philip
Morse, L. L.
Morton, Alpheus Cleophas
Muldoon, John
Murnaghan, George
Murphy, John (Kerry, East)
Murphy, N. J. (Kilkenny, S.)
Myer, Horatio
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nicholls, George
Nolan, Joseph
Norman, Sir Henry
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nugent, Sir Walter Richard
O'Brien, Kendal (Tipperary, Mid
O'Brien, William (Cork)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Doherty, Philip
O'Donnell, C. J. (Walworth)
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Grady, J.
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Kelly, James (Roscommon, N.
O'Malley, William
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
O'Shee, James John
Parker, James (Halifax)
Partington, Oswald
Pearce, Robert (Staffs, Leek)
Pearce, William (Limehouse)
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Philipps, Col. Ivor (S'thampton
Philipps, J. Wynford (Pembroke
Philipps, Owen C. (Pembroke)
Philipps, John (Longford, S.)
Pickersgill, Edward Hare
Pirie, Duncan V.
Pollard, Dr.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, C. E. (Edinb'gh, Central)
Price, Robert John (Norfolk, E.
Priestley, Arthur (Grantham)
Rainy, A. Rolland
Raphael, Herbert H.
Rea, Russell (Gloucester)
Rea, Walter Russell (Scarboro'
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Richards, Thomas (W. Monm'th
Roberts, G. H. (Norwich)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs)
Robertson, Rt. Hn. E. (Dundee)
Robertson, Sir G Scott (Bradf'rd
Robertson, J. M. (Tyneside)
Robinson, S.
Robson, Sir William Snowdon
Roche, Augustine (Cork)
Roche, John (Galway, East)
Roe, Sir Thomas
Rowlands, J.
Runciman, Walter
Russell, T. W.
Rutherford, V. H. (Brentford)
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Schwann, C. Duncan (Hyde)
Schwann, Sir C. E. (Manchester)
Scott, A. H. (Ashton-under-Lyne
Seaverns, J. H.
Seddon, J.
Seely, Colonel
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Rt. Hon. T. (Hawick B.)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Silcock, Thomas Ball
Simon, John Allsebrook
Sinclair, Rt. Hon. John
Smeaton, Donald Mackenzie
Smyth, Thomas F. (Leitrim, S.)
Spicer, Sir Albert
Stanger, H. Y.
Stanley, Albert (Staffs, N.W.)
Stewart, Halley (Greenock)
Stuart, James (Sunderland)
Summerbell, T.
Taylor, John W. (Durham)
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Thomas, Sir A. (Glamorgan, E.)
Thomas, David Alfred (Merthyr
Thomasson, Franklin
Thompson, J. W. H (Somerset, E
Tomkinson, James
Torrance, Sir A. M
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Ure, Alexander
Verney, F. W.
Vivian, Henry
Waldron, Laurence Ambrose
Walsh, Stephen
Ward, W. Dudley (Southampton
Wardle, George J.
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, Rt. Hn. E. (Clackman'n)
Wason John Cathcart (Orkney
Watt, Henry A.
Whitbread, Howard
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
White, Patrick (Meath, North)
Whiteley, Rt. Hn. G. (York, W.R
Whitley, John Henry (Halifax)
Whittaker, Sir Thomas Palmer
Wilkie, Alexander
Williams, Llewelyn (Carmarth'n
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Wlliamson, A
Wilson, Hon. G. G. (Hull, W.)
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W. R.)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid)
Wilson, J. H. (Middlesbrough)
Wilson, P. W. (St. Pancras, S.)
Wilson, W. T. (Westhoughton)
Wood, T. M'Kinnon

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Captain Donelan and Mr. Patrick O'Brien.

NOES.

Anson, Sir William Reynell
Anstruther-Gray, Major
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Rt. Hn Hugh O.
Ashley, W. W.
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt. Hn. Sir H.
Balcarres, Lord
Baldwin, Stanley
Balfour, Rt Hn. A. J. (City Lond.
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Baring, Capt. Hn. G. (Winchester
Barrie, H. T. (Londonderry, N.
Beach, Hn. Michael Hugh Hicks
Beckett, Hon. Gervase
Bellairs, Carlyon
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bowles, G. Stewart
Boyle, Sir Edward
Bridgeman, W. Clive
Bull, Sir William James
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Butcher, Samuel Henry
Campbell, Rt. Hon. J. H. M.
Carlile, E. Hildred
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Castlereagh, Viscount
Cave, George
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord John P. Joicey-

Cecil, Lord R. (Marylebone, E.)
Chamberlain,RtHnJ.A.(Worc.)
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Clark, George Smith
Clive, Percy Archer
Coates,E. Feetham (Lewisham)
Cochrane, Hon.Thos. H. A. E.
Collings,Rt.Hn.J.(Birmingh'm)
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Cory, Sir Clifford John
Courthope, G. Loyd
Craig,Charles Curtis (Antrim,S.
Craig,Captain James(Down,E.)
Craik, Sir Henry
Dixon-Hartland,Sir FredDixon
Doughty, Sir George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Du Cros, Arthur Philip
Duncan,Robert (Lanark,Govan
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)
Faber, George Denison (York)
Faber, Capt. W. V. (Hants,W.)
Fardell, Sir T. George
Fell, Arthur
Fetherstonhaugh, Godfrey
Fletcher, J. S.
Forster, Henry William
Gardner, Ernest
Gibbs, G. A. (Bristol, West)
Gordon, J.
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Gretton, John
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Guinness, Walter Edward
Haddock, George G.
Hamilton, Marquess of
Hardy,Laurence(Kent,Ashford
Harris, Frederick Leverton
Harrison-Broadley, H. B.
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heaton, John Henniker
Helmsley, Viscount
Herbert, T. Arnold (Wycombe)
Hill, Sir Clement
Hills, J. W.
Houston, Robert Paterson
Hunt, Rowland
Kennaway,Rt.Hn. Sir John H.
Keswick, William
Kimber, Sir Henry
King,Sir Henry Seymour(Hull)
Lambton,Hon. Frederick Wm.
Lane-Fox, G. R.
Law, Andrew Bonar (Dulwich)
Lee,ArthurH.(Hants,Fareham)
Lockwood,Rt.Hn. Lt.-Col.A.R.
Long,Rt. Hn. Walter(Dublin,S.
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Sir Francis William
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
MacGaw, William J. MacGeagh
M'Arthur, Charles
M'Calmont, Colonel James
Magnus, Sir Philip
Marks,G.Croydon (Launceston)
Mason, James F. (Windsor)
Meysey-Thompson, E. C.
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Moore, William
Morpeth, Viscount
Muntz, Sir Philip A.
Nicholson,Wm. G. (Petersfield)
Nield, Herbert
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Parker, SirGilbert (Gravesend)
Pease,Herbert Pike(Darlington
Percy, Earl
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Randles, Sir John Scurrah
Ratcliff, Major R. F.
Rawlinson,John Frederick Peel
Remnant, James Farquharson
Roberts,S. (Sheffield, Ecclesall)
Ronaldshay, Earl of
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Salter, Arthur Clavell
Sandys, Lieut.-Col.Thos. Myles
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Sheffield,SirBerkeley GeorgeD.
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smith,Abel H. (Hertford, East)
Smith,F.E. (Liverpool,Walton)
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Stanley,Hn. Arthur (Ormskirk
Stanley,Hn.A. Lyulph (Chesh.)
Starkey, John R.
Staveley-Hill, Henry (Staff'sh.
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Talbot,Rt.Hn.J.G. (Oxf'dUniv
Thomson,W.Mitchell- (Lanark)
Thornton, Percy M.
Warde, Col. C. E. (Kent, Mid)
Whitehead, Rowland
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wilson,A.Stanley (York, E. R.)
Winterton, Earl
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wortley, Rt. Hn. C. B. Stuart-
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Younger, George

Tellers for the Noes—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Viscount Valentia.

Main Question again proposed.

*Mr. SIMON (Essex, Walthamstow) in moving to add, at the end, the words "subject to the supreme authority of the Imperial Parliament," said that at that hour of the evening, and at that stage of the debate, he would only occupy a very few moments in putting forward the Amendment. He hoped it might be received with approval in every quarter of the House. It was the essential condition upon which Liberal Home Rulers, who were to be found on that bench, whatever the hon. Member for North Louth might say, declared themselves to be Home Rulers and supporters of the Irish Party in this matter. It was a condition which he believed was accepted by the hon. and learned Gentleman the Leader of the Irish Party, and whatever might be said of other Parties he had always understood that all followers of the Irish Party implicitly obeyed their Leader. It was a condition which he hoped would be accepted by hon. Members on the other side of the House, although he knew that some of them thought that there was an essential contradiction between granting self-government to Ireland and maintaining supremacy over Ireland. [Opposition cries of "Hear, hear."] He knew they thought so—and so did their political ancestors about Canada, and only two years ago they were professing the same opinion when self-government was proposed to be given to the Transvaal. The only other observation he had to make was this, and he made it with great respect to an older Member than he was, but he ventured to say, in reference to the speech last delivered in the debate, that the hon. Member for North Louth ought to remember that in the history of Irish reform in this House damage had more than once been done to the Irish cause by extravagant and embittered speech. As far as they were concerned, on that side of the House, they were convinced Home Rulers, whether with the approval and sanction of the hon. Member or without it, and they were glad to find themselves led by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He begged to move.

MR. TREVELYAN (Yorkshire, W.R., Elland) seconded.

Amendment proposed—

"At the end of the Question to add the words "subject to the supreme authority of the Imperial Parliament.'"—(*Mr. Simon.*)

Question, "That those words be there added," put, and agreed to.

Main Question, as amended, put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 313; Noes, 157. (Division List No. 60.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N. E.
Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Agnew, George William
Alden, Percy
Ambrose, Robert
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Asquith, Rt. Hn. Herbert Henry
Astbury, John Meir
Atherley-Jones, L.
Baker, Sir John (Portsmouth)
Baker, Joseph A. (Finsbury, E.
Balfour, Robert (Lanark)
Baring, Godfrey (Isle of Wight)
Barlow, Sir John E. (Somerset)
Barnard, E. B.
Barnes, G. N.
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Barry, Redmond J. (Tyrone, N.)
Beale, W. P.
Belloc, Hilaire Joseph Peter R.
Benn, Sir J. Williams (Devonp'rt
Benn, W. (T'w'r' Hamlets, S. Geo
Bennett, E. N.
Berridge, T. H. D.
Bethell, Sir J. H. (Essex, Romf'rd
Birrell, Rt. Hon. Augustine
Boland, John
Bottomley, Horatio
Bowerman, C. W.
Brace, William
Bramsdon, T. A.
Bryce, J. Annan
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burke, E. Haviland-
Burns, Rt. Hon. John
Burt, Rt. Hon. Thomas
Buxton, Rt. Hn. Sydney Charles
Byles, William Pollard
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Causton, Rt Hn. Richard Knight
Channing, Sir Francis Allston
Cherry, Rt. Hon. R. R.
Churchill, Rt. Hon. Winston S.
Clancy, John Joseph

Cleland, J. W.
Clough, William
Clynes, J. R.
Cobbold, Felix Thornley
Collins, Sir Wm. J. (S. Pancras, W
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Cooper, G. J.
Corbett, C H (Sussex, E. Grinst'd
Cornwall, Sir Edwin A.
Cotton, Sir H. J. S.
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, Sir William Randal
Crooks, William
Crosfield, A. H.
Crossley, William J.
Cullinan, J.
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, Ellis William (Eifion)
Davies, Timothy (Fulham)
Delany, William
Devlin, Joseph
Dickinson, W. H. (St. Pancras, N
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dillon, John
Dobson, Thomas W.
Duckworth, James
Duffy, William J.
Duncan, C. (Barrow-in-Furness
Duncan, J. H. (York, Otley)
Dunne, Major E. Martin (Walsall
Edwards, Clement (Denbigh)
Elibank, Master of
Ellis, Rt. Hon. John Edward
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Esslemont, George Birnie
Evans, Sir Samuel T.
Everett, R. Lacey
Farrell, James Patrick
Fenwick, Charles
Ferens, T. R.
Ffrench, Peter
Fiennes, Hon. Eustace
Findlay, Alexander
Flavin, Michael Joseph

Flynn, James Christopher
Foster, Rt. Hon. Sir Walter
Fuller, John Michael F.
Fullerton, Hugh
Furness, Sir Christopher
Gibb, James (Harrow)
Gilhooly, James
Gill, A. H.
Gladstone, Rt. Hn Herbert John
Glover, Thomas
Gooch, George Peabody (Bath)
Greenwood, G. (Peterborough)
Grey, Rt. Hon. Sir Edward
Gulland, John W.
Gurdon, Rt Hn Sir W. Brampton
Gwynn, Stephen Lucius
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Hall, Frederick
Halpin, J.
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Lewis
Hardy, George A. (Suffolk)
Harmsworth, R. L (Caithn'ss-sh
Harrington, Timothy
Hart-Davies, T.
Harwood, George
Haslam, Lewis (Monmouth)
Hayden, John Patrick
Hazleton, Richard
Healy, Timothy Michael
Hemmerde, Edward George
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Henderson, J. M. (Aberdeen, W.)
Henry, Charles S.
Herbert, Col. Sir Ivor (Mon., S.)
Higham, John Sharp
Hobart, Sir Robert
Hogan, Michael
Holt, Richard Durning
Horridge, Thomas Gardner
Howard, Hon. Geoffrey
Hudson, Walter
Hyde, Clarendon
Idris, T. H. W.
Illingworth, Percy H.

Jackson, R. S.
Jardine, Sir J.
Jenkins, J.
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Jones, Sir D. Brynmor (Swansea
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jordan, Jeremiah
Jowett, F. W.
Joyce, Michael
Kavanagh, Walter M.
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kekewich, Sir George
Kelley, George D.
Kennedy, Vincent Paul
Kettle, Thomas Michael
Kilbride, Denis
Laidlaw, Robert
Lamb, Edmund G. (Leominster
Lardner, James Carrige Rushe
Law, Hugh A. (Donegal, W.)
Leese, Sir Joseph F. (Accrington
Lehmann, R. C.
Lever, W. H. (Cheshire, Wirral)
Levy, Sir Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, Rt. Hon. David
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
Lupton, Arnold
Macdonald, J. R. (Leicester)
Macdonald, J. M. (Falkirk B'ghs
Mackarness, Frederic C.
Maclean, Donald
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
Macpherson, J. T.
MacVeagh, Jeremiah (Down, S.
MacVeigh, Charles (Donegal, E.)
M'Callum, John M.
M'Crae, George
M'Kean, John
M'Kenna, Rt. Hon. Reginald
M'Killop, W.
M'Micking, Major G.
Maddison, Frederick
Mallet, Charles E.
Manfield, Harry (Northants)
Masterman, C. F. G.
Meagher, Michael
Meehan, Francis E. (Leitrim, N.)
Meehan, Patrick A. (Queen's Co.
Menzies, Walter
Mond, A.
Mooney, J. J.
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Morrell, Philip
Morton, Alpheus Cleophas
Muldoon, John
Murnaghan, George
Murphy, John (Kerry, East)
Murphy, N. J. (Kilkenny, S.)
Myer, Horatio

Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nicholson, Charles N. (Doncast'r
Nolan, Joseph
Norman, Sir Henry
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nugent, Sir Walter Richard
O'Brien, Kendal (Tipperary Mid
O'Brien, William (Cork)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Doherty, Philip
O'Donnell, C. J. (Walworth)
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Grady, J.
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Kelly, James (Roscommon, N
O'Malley, William
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
O'Shee, James John
Parker, James (Halifax)
Partington, Oswald
Pearce, Robert (Staffs, Leek)
Pearce, William (Limehouse)
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Philipps, Col. Ivor (S'thampton)
Philipps, J. Wynford (Pembroke
Philipps, Owen C. (Pembroke)
Phillips, John (Longford, S.)
Pickersgill, Edward Hare
Pollard, Dr.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, C. E. (Edinburgh, Central
Price, Robert John (Norfolk, E.
Rainy, A. Rolland
Rea, Russell (Gloucester)
Rea, Walter Russell (Scarboro'
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Richards, Thomas (W. Monm'th
Roberts, G. H. (Norwich)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robertson, Rt. Hn. E. (Dundee)
Robertson, Sir G. Scott (Bradf'rd
Robertson, J. M. (Tyneside)
Robinson, S.
Robson, Sir William Snowdon
Roche, Augustine (Cork)
Roche, John (Galway, East)
Roe, Sir Thomas
Rowlands, J.
Runciman, Walter
Russell, T. W.
Rutherford, V. H. (Brentford)
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Schwann, C. Duncan (Hyde)
Schwann, Sir C. E. (Manchester)
Scott, A. H. (Ashton under Lyne

Seaverns, J. H.
Seddon, J.
Seely, Colonel
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Rt. Hon. T. (Hawick, B.
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Silcock, Thomas Ball
Simon, John Allsebrook
Sinclair, Rt. Hon. John
Smeaton, Donald Mackenzie
Smyth, Thomas F. (Leitrim, S.)
Spicer, Sir Albert
Stanger, H. Y.
Stanley, Albert (Staffs, N. W.)
Stewart, Halley (Greenock)
Stuart, James (Sunderland)
Summerbell, T.
Taylor, John W. (Durham)
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Tennant, H. J. (Berwickshire)
Thomas, Sir A. (Glamorgan, E.)
Thomas, David Alfred (Merthyr)
Thomasson, Franklin
Thompson, J. W. H. (Somerset, E.
Tomkinson, James
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Ure, Alexander
Verney, F. W.
Vivian, Henry
Waldron, Laurence Ambrose
Walsh, Stephen
Ward, W. Dudley (Southampt'n
Wardle, George J.
Waring, Walter
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, Rt. Hn. E (Clackmannan
Watt, Henry A.
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
White, Patrick (Meath, North)
Whiteley, Rt. Hn. G. (York, W. R
Whitley, John Henry (Halifax)
Whittaker, Sir Thomas Palmer
Wilkie, Alexander
Williams, Llewelyn (Carmarth'n
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Williamson, A.
Wilson, Hon. G. G. (Hull, W.)
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W. R.)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid)
Wilson, J. H. (Middlesbrough)
Wilson, P. W. (St. Pancras, S.)
Wilson, W. T. (Westhoughton)
Wood, T. M'Kinnon

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Captain Donelan and Mr. Patrick O'Brien.

NOES.

Anson, Sir William Reynell
Anstruther-Gray, Major
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Rt Hn. Hugh O.
Ashley, W. W.
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt. Hn. Sir H.
Balcarres, Lord

Baldwin, Stanley
Balfour, Rt Hn. A. J. (City Lond.)
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Baring, Capt. Hn. G (Winchester
Barrie, H. T. (Londonderry, N.)
Beach, Hn. Michael Hugh Hicks

Beauchamp, E.
Beck, A. Cecil
Beckett, Hon. Gervase
Bellairs, Carlyon
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bowles, G. Stewart
Boyle, Sir Edward

Bridgeman, W. Clive
Bull, Sir William James
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Butcher, Samuel Henry
Campbell, Rt. Hon. J. H. M.
Carlile, E. Hildred
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Castlereagh, Viscount
Cave, George
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord John P. Joicey-
Cecil, Lord R. (Marylebone, E.)
Chamberlain,Rt Hn.J.A(Worc.
Chance, Frederick William
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Clark, George Smith
Clive, Percy Archer
Coates, E. Feetham(Lewisham)
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Collings,Rt. Hn.J.(Birmingh'm
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Cory, Sir Clifford John
Courthope, G. Loyd
Craig, Charles Curtis(Antrim,S.
Craig, Capt. James (Down, E.)
Craik, Sir Henry
Dalmeny, Lord
Dixon-Hartland,Sir FredDixon
Doughty, Sir George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Du Cros, Arthur Philip
Duncan, Robert(Lanark,Govan
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)
Faber, George Denison (York)
Faber, Capt. W. V. (Hants, W.)
Fardell, Sir T. George
Fell, Arthur
Ferguson, R. C. Munro
Fetherstonhaugh, Godfrey
Fletcher, J. S.
Forster, Henry William
Freeman-Thomas, Freeman
Gardner, Ernest
Gibbs, G. A. (Bristol, West)
Gordon, J.
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Gretton, John
Guinness, Walter Edward
Haddock, George B.
Hamilton, Marquess of
Hardy,Laurence(Kent, Ashf'rd
Harris, Frederick Leverton
Harrison-Broadley, H. B.
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heaton, John Henniker
Hedges, A. Paget
Helmsley, Viscount
Herbert, T. Arnold (Wycombe)
Hill, Sir Clement
Hills, J. W.
Houston, Robert Paterson
Hunt, Rowland
Kennaway, Rt.Hn. Sir John H.
Keswick, William
Kimber, Sir Henry
King,Sir Henry Seymour(Hull)
Lambton, Hon. Frederick Wm
Lane-Fox, G. R.
Law, Andrew Bonar (Dulwich)
Lee,Arthur H.(Hants,Fareham
Lockwood,Rt.Hn. Lt.-Col.A.R.
Long,Rt.Hn.Walter (Dublin,S)
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Sir Francis William
Lynch, H. B.
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
MacGaw, William J. MacGeagh
M'Arthur, Charles
M'Calmont, Colonel James
Magnus, Sir Philip
Mason, James F. (Windsor)
Meysey-Thompson, E. C.
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Moore, William
Morpeth, Viscount
Muntz, Sir Philip A.
Nicholls, George
Nicholson,Wm. G. (Petersfield)
Nield, Herbert
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Parker, Sir Gilbert (Gravesend)
Pease,Herbert Pike(Darlington
Percy, Earl
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Randles, Sir John Scurrah
Ratcliff, Major R. F.
Rawlinson,John Frederick Peel
Remnant, James Farquharson
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roberts, S. (Sheffield,Ecclesall)
Ronaldshay, Earl of
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Salter, Arthur Clavell
Sandys, Lieut.-Col. Thos.Myles
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Sheffield,Sir Berkeley GeorgeD.
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smith, Abel H. (Hertford,East)
Smith, F.E.(Liverpool,Walton)
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Soares, Ernest J.
Stanley, Hn. Arthur (Ormskirk
Stanley, Hn. A.Lyulph(Chesh.)
Starkey, John R.
Staveley-Hill, Henry (Staff'sh.
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Talbot,Rt.Hn.J.G.(Oxf'd Univ.
Thomson,W.Mitchell- (Lanark)
Thornton, Percy M.
Warde, Col. C. E. (Kent, Mid)
Wason, John Cathcart(Orkney)
Wedgwood, Josiah C.
Whitbread, Howard
Whitehead, Rowland
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wills, Arthur Walters
Wilson,A. Stanley (York, E.R.)
Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh.N.)
Winterton, Earl
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wortley, Rt. Hn. C. B. Stuart-
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Younger, George

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Viscount Valentia.

Resolved, That the present system of Government in Ireland is in opposition to the will of the Irish people and gives them no voice in the management of their own affairs; that the system is consequently inefficient and extravagantly costly; that it does not enjoy the confidence of any section of the population; that it is productive of universal discontent and unrest, and is incapable of satisfactorily promoting the material and intellectual progress of the people; that the reform of Irish Government is a matter vital to the interests of Ireland and calculated greatly to promote the well-being of the people of Great Britain; and, in the opinion of this House, the solution of this problem can only be attained by giving to the Irish people the legislative and executive control of all purely Irish affairs, subject to the supreme authority of the Imperial Parliament.

And, it being after half-past Eleven of the clock on Monday evening, Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House without Question put, pursuant to the Standing Order.

Adjourned at seven minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Tuesday, 31*st March*, 1908.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House, That the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificate from the Examiners that the Standing Order applicable to the following Bill has been complied with :—Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 1) [H.L.].

The same was ordered to lie on the Table.

Great Western Railway Bill [H.L.].—Reported with Amendments.

Metropolitan Electric Tramways Bill [H.L.].—Reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments.

Audenshaw Urban District Council Bill [H.L.]; Merthyr Tydfil Corporation Bill [H.L.].—Read 3ª, and passed, and sent to the Commons.

Llanelly Gas Bill [H.L.].—Read 3ª, An Amendment made: Bill passed, and sent to the Commons.

Taff Vale Railway Bill [H.L.]; Fishguard and Rosslare Railways and Harbours Bill [H.L.]; Skegness Urban District Council Bill [H.L.]; North British and Mercantile Insurance Company Bill [H.L.].—Read 3ª, and passed, and sent to the Commons.

Bury and District Joint Water Board Bill; Dublin and South Eastern Railway Bill; Finchley Urban District Council Bill; Seaham Harbour Dock Bill.—Brought from the Commons, read 1ª, and referred to the Examiners.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

CAPE OF GOOD HOPE (OBSERVATORY).

Report of His Majesty's Astronomer at the Cape of Good Hope to the Secretary of the Admiralty, for the years 1906-1907.

NAVY (ESTIMATES, 1907-1908) (PROGRAMME OF SHIPBUILDING, REPAIRS, MAINTENANCE, ETC.)

Statement showing the probable effect on the programme due to re-appropriation of cash provision, etc.

COMMERCIAL, No. 2. (1908).

Despatches from His Majesty's Minister at Panama, respecting the employment of British West Indian labour in the Panama Canal Zone.

TREATY SERIES, No. 7 (1908).

Convention between the United Kingdom and France respecting commercial relations between France and Barbados, signed at London, 9th January, 1907. (Ratifications exchanged at London 18th March, 1908).

ARMY.

General Annual Report on the British Army for the year ended 30th September, 1907, with which is incorporated the Annual Report of Recruiting prepared by command of the Army Council.

Presented [by command], and ordered to lie on the Table.

TERRITORIAL AND RESERVE FORCES ACT, 1907.

Three Orders in Council, dated 19th March, 1908, viz :—For the transfer of the Yeomanry and Volunteers to the Territorial Force; Relating to the property of the Honourable Artillery Company; Applying certain enactments relating to the Militia, Yeomanry, or Volunteers to the Territorial Force.

NAVAL AND MARINE PAY AND PENSIONS ACT, 1865.

Orders in Council, dated 19th March, 1908, approving memorials of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty praying sanction to :—Certain improvements in the pay and position and new regulations for the retirement of engineer officers of His Majesty's Naval Service; the payment of a special allowance of 1s. 6d. a day to the chief or senior gunner of the Torpedo School Ship at Sheerness.

FOREIGN JURISDICTION ACT, 1890.

Order in Council, dated 19th March, 1908, entitled "The Northern Nigeria Order in Council, 1906."

SUPREME COURT OF JUDICATURE ACT, 1875.

Order in Council, dated 19th March 1908, amending the Order in Council of 28th July, 1893, as amended by the Order in Council of 7th May, 1907, relating to the Circuits of the Judges.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

PATENTS AND DESIGNS BILL [H.L.].

Reported from the Standing Committee without amendment; and to be read 3ª to-morrow.

MUNICIPAL REPRESENTATION BILL [H.L.].

Reported from the Standing Committee without further amendment: The Report of the Amendments made in Committee of the Whole House to be received to-morrow.

SUNDAY CLOSING (SHOPS) BILL [H.L.].

Reported from the Standing Committee with further Amendments; The Report of the Amendments made in Committee of the Whole House and by the Standing Committee to be received on Thursday next, and Bill to be printed as amended.

ARMY (ANNUAL) BILL.

[SECOND READING.]

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (The Earl of PORTSMOUTH): My Lords, I do not intend to weary the House with any speech on this occasion. There is absolutely nothing new in principle in this Bill, and I beg formally to move that it be read a second time.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*The Earl of Portsmouth.*)

On Question, Bill read 2ª, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House To-morrow.

THE TERRITORIAL FORCE.

***THE EARL OF DARTMOUTH** rose to ask the Under-Secretary of State for War—(1) What assistance, if any, will be given to County Associations in the matter of recruiting by the military authorities to enable them to raise the number of recruits required for the various arms of the new force? (2) When the new units are actually raised, and the military authorities are compelled to retrench original members of the County Associations to make room for the representatives of the new arms, in order to avoid this invidious and unpleasant necessity, will the Secretary of State consider the advisability of having a supplemental list? (3) In the event of a range situated in one county, which owing to the disbandment of a unit in that county may no longer be required, where private contributions have been employed to secure the range, will compensation be given? If arrangements can be made to transfer the range to another county, will the two commanding officers of the units concerned be entitled to agree on the terms of transfer, or will such arrangements be entrusted to the County Associations or the Army Council? (4) The County Associations have to provide horses for ordinary training. The country has been partitioned by the military authorities into suitable areas for the purchase of horses in the event of mobilisation. What will be the relative position of the County Associations and the military purchasers? Will the military authorities purchase both for the Regular Army and the Territorial Force, or will the County Associations be expected to find horses either by hire or purchase for their own troops? (5) What is a "unit?"

The noble Earl said: My Lords, as the period of the existence of the old Volunteer system is rapidly coming to an end, I venture to think that the Questions I desire to put to the noble Earl the Under-Secretary are of considerable importance. My first Question refers to what assistance, if any, is to be given to the County Associations in their task of raising the recruits necessary for the various arms of the Territorial Force, and I think it is obvious that every possible assistance should be given to those who have undertaken to raise these new arms if they are to carry out satisfactorily the duties they have so willingly undertaken. Sergeant-instructors are now responsible for recruiting for the Regulars, and, however good a sergeant-instructor may be as such, he is liable to be sent back to his regiment if his efforts as a recruiting sergeant are not successful. That is a system which I hope will not be maintained in the future, because in the new Territorial Force he would obviously be under two masters; and there is a strong objection, in certain parts of the country, on the part of village mothers to allow their sons to join the Reserve Forces if they can help it, because they feel that if the sergeant-instructor once gets hold of them they will pass them on to the Line. It would be instructive for us to know whose servant the sergeant-instructor is going to be, and we desire to know whether any professional assistance will be given to the County Associations in the matter of recruiting.

My second Question has reference to the County Associations, and the point I raise will become an important one at a very early date. I hope the noble Earl appreciates my use of the word "retrench," because that, I think, accurately describes the position at the present time. I understand, from an answer given in another place by the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies, that retrenchment may mean retirement, while hon. Members on the other side of the House are of opinion that retrenchment must mean discharge. When the new units are actually raised and room has to be found on the County Associations for the representatives of the new arms, the original members of those Associations will have either to be retired or discharged; and as it is very important to secure the assistance of as many as possible of those gentlemen who will have taken an active part in the early formation of the Territorial Force, it is obviously undesirable that they should be turned off the County Associations just at the moment when their experience is beginning to be of value. What I would impress upon the noble Earl is this, that the County Associations should be given the opportunity, if they so desire, of having a supernumerary list composed of the representatives of the new units, who will have all the privileges of members of the Associations, who will attend the meetings and speak, and vote, and gradually be absorbed as vacancies occur.

The third Question standing in my name on the Paper is one of some little personal difficulty. It concerns ranges, and I ask it not as a member of a County Association, but in the disembodied spirit of a disbanded colonel of a Volunteer regiment.

The next Question is a very important one, and refers to the provision of horses. Two years ago chief constables were asked to make inquiries in their respective districts about available horses. The request was repeated last year. By this scheme the provision of horses for the Territorial Force is thrown on the County Associations. A further communication has now been made suggesting a division of the county into areas for horse buying in case of mobilisation—that is to say, apparently, for providing the necessary horses for the Regular Army on sudden mobilisation. I should like to ask what will be the position respectively of the Regular Army and the Territorial Force when mobilisation takes place. It has been pointed out, on more than one occasion, that it is absolutely important to have horses that have been trained to perform the duties required of them. The County Associations have to provide horses for ordinary training. Will the War Office representative be able to take all those horses for the Regular Army on mobilisation? It is just as well that we should know how we stand. We quite recognise, of course, that the Regular Army must come first, but we wish to know in what position we stand.

My last Question is—What is a "unit"? The noble Earl the Under-Secretary has written to me privately regarding this Question, and has asked whether I have anything at the back of my mind. I have not. From the civilian point of view a unit is one. I have a little book on tactics; I do not know whether it is very reliable, but it appears from it that, from the military point of view, a unit is any number of troops exceeding one. From the civilian point of view a mounted soldier would be a unit. In the event of misadventure in the field and the temporary separation of the soldier from his horse, would he and his horse become two units? As the County Associations are to be paid by results, and as those results are to depend on the number of units raised, it is obviously important for the Associations to know if they may themselves define what a unit is. If so, I can undertake to say there will be no want of money. It is important to know, for instance, whether a half battalion raised in a particular district is to be a unit, or whether a company is to be a unit. Of what exactly will a unit consist? We had a conversation in your Lordships' House the other day about a gun allotted to Staffordshire and Shropshire. Is that gun a unit? I understand that it has arrived in Staffordshire, but without limber and without stores. Still, the commanding officer thinks well of that gun, and is of opinion that if he could get the other eleven complete at an early date he would be able to do some excellent work and show Lord Roberts that he was wrong in the view he took. Here is one gun allotted to Staffordshire and Shropshire. While at the present time Shropshire and Staffordshire have a joint brigade of Garrison Artillery, under this scheme Shropshire is to be in one division, in one command, and in one regimental district, and Staffordshire is to be completely separated. Yet when I ask a question on the subject the noble Earl tells me that one gun has been sent to Shropshire and Staffordshire. It rather indicates that he does not know what is the foundation of this scheme. The men concerned are now waiting for information, and if the War Office could only forget its traditions and let us know fully what is proposed we believe we could make the Territorial Force a success.

THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH: My Lords, before I deal with the Questions put to me by the noble Earl, perhaps I may be allowed to congratulate him on having got part of his gun. I can assure him the other parts will follow very quickly. As regards the first Question, in the regulations which will be published almost immediately, officers commanding Regular recruiting areas are ordered to give all the assistance they can in this matter, and Regular officers, when such a course is most convenient, are instructed to attest and finally approve recruits. As regards the second Question, I think the suggestion of my noble friend is rather an impracticable one. A man must be either a member or not a member of the Association. If, hereafter, we desire, as I daresay we shall, to raise an increased number of units from any particular county, we shall have to increase the numbers of that county's Association by framing a new scheme which will in due course be presented to Parliament, as laid down in the Act.

In reply to the third Question, if the range is private property, of which the corps has only had the use, it remains private property; but if the range in question is corps property—that is, property vested in the commanding officer of the corps, which has been partially provided out of private subscriptions—then all corps property of a disbanded unit reverts to the Secretary of State; and unless the private funds were distinctly advanced and secured as a loan no obligation to repay the contributions will be recognised. That is provided for by Section 8 of the Military Lands Act, 1892. As regards the latter part of the Question, the Secretary of State, in whom the range is vested on disbandment, can make such arrangements as he thinks fit whether for the transfer to another County Association or for any other purpose. I need hardly say that in such a case, he would, as far as possible, consult the views of those locally interested. In reply to the fourth Question, the provision of horses is a very difficult one, but the War Office, in conjunction with the Board of Agriculture, are endeavouring to draw up a scheme which will help us in regard to this matter. As regards the specific Question asked, I can say that the military authorities will only purchase for the Regular Army. The County Associations will be expected to provide for their own troops.

As to the meaning of the word "unit" an exact definition is not easy to give. In its ordinary military sense, the word is a somewhat elastic term, depending for its precise significance on the context in which it is used. In the King's Regulations the word is used to denote an infantry battalion or depot, a cavalry regiment or depot, a battery or depot of Royal Horse or Field Artillery, a company or depot of Royal Garrison Artillery, a field troop, bridging train, telegraph or balloon company, etc., in the Royal Engineers. It is used to denote a company in the departmental services like the Army Service Corps. It is, therefore, applied to the battalion of infantry, the regiment of cavalry, the battery of artillery, etc. To speak of the County Association raising units is to imply that the Army Council, through the general officer commanding-in-chief, informed the county that in the general scheme of the Territorial Force the quota of troops the particular county was expected to furnish was so many infantry battalions, so many batteries of horse or field artillery, so many companies of Army Service Corps, etc.

The War Office has issued a financial memorandum to Associations which fully explains the basis on which what is called the establishment grant is to be paid. In each arm of the service the organisation taken as the basis of payment is either the actual unit laid down in the general scheme of requirements or a sub-division of that unit. For instance, Staffordshire is asked to raise, say, four battalions of infantry, or thirty-two companies (eight companies per battalion). The establishment grant is £100 per infantry company. This county would, therefore, receive £3,200 in respect of its quota of infantry. Supposing that the county were asked to raise *inter alia* a battery of heavy artillery and ammunition column, according to the financial memorandum the grant for this unit would be £200. Supposing again the county were asked to raise a Yeomanry regiment, the county would be paid on the basis of £95 per squadron which is the sub-division of the mounted regiment.

THE EARL OF DARTMOUTH: I understand that no extra grant is to be given in cases where half batteries are raised in one place and half batteries in another? Can the noble Earl tell me what penalty attaches to a chairman of a County Association if he passively resists the Act?

THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH: I cannot state off-hand what would be the penalty in such a case. I think it is a matter which should be referred to the Law Officers of the Crown. With regard to the other point referred to by the noble Earl, I am afraid we cannot make any extra allowance on that ground.

LORD LOVAT: The noble Earl, in replying to Lord Dartmouth's fourth Question, stated that the War Office, in conjunction with the Board of Agriculture, were drawing up a scheme; but that scheme will affect horses in the future. The point on which I understand Lord Dartmouth wants information is what the Associations are to do meanwhile with respect to the providing of horses. There has only been one circular issued as yet to the County Associations on the subject, and in that circular the Associations are asked to do nothing at all in procuring horses until the whole demand of the Army has been satisfied. The Army requires 60,000 horses, and according to the rate at which they were obtained during the Boer War, it will take something like nine months to realise that number. Are the County Associations to do nothing meanwhile? The registration is done, not as it should be by officers commanding the Artillery or Yeomanry, or by men having some knowledge of horses, but actually by constabulary. A local policeman goes round and asks people if they have horses suitable for the Regular Army. The way the registration is done at present is a perfect farce. I hope we shall be assured that some consideration is being given to this important question. I think, also, that steps should be taken at once, by Order in Council, to make the representation of the different units on the Associations more exact.

THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH: As regards the latter point, that is a question I cannot answer off-hand. Perhaps the noble Lord will communicate with me as to any case in which, in his opinion, a change should be made, and I will see that the matter is considered. As to the registration of horses, I have never made any secret of the serious and unsatisfactory condition in which we are placed in regard to that matter. But the point alluded to by Lord Lovat did not arise out of the Questions on the Paper; and if the noble Lord likes to put down a Question to be asked some time after Easter, I shall, perhaps, be able to give him some information.

THE EARL OF DARTMOUTH: Is the noble Earl the President of the Board of Agriculture prepared to tell us anything about the progress of the scheme referred to by Lord Portsmouth?

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES (Earl CARRINGTON): I never like to say anything without being certain that I am absolutely accurate. I therefore ask my noble friend to extend to me his indulgence by allowing me to put off making a statement for a short time. I can assure him that things are progressing very favourably, and I hope ere long to be able to make an announcement which will be satisfactory not only to my noble friend but to the House generally.

SUNDAY OPENING OF ART GALLERIES.

LORD NEWTON rose to ask His Majesty's Government why the National Gallery, the National Portrait Gallery, and the Tate Gallery were closed on Sundays during five months in the year, whereas other similar institutions remained open. The noble Lord said: My Lords, in calling attention to the anomaly which is indicated in my Question I think I may safely say that when in 1896 the House of Commons unanimously passed a Resolution in favour of the Sunday opening of museums and galleries, almost everybody was under the impression that the question was] finally and definitely settled. I confess that until only a few days ago I was under that impression myself, and I only discovered my error when, on proceeding to the National Gallery a short time ago on a Sunday afternoon, I found to my astonishment—I had almost said to my indignation—that that institution was closed on Sundays for no less a period than five months in the year—namely, during the months of November, December, January, February, and March; and the same thing applies to other galleries.

I find I am not the only person who entertained this mistaken belief, because in consequence of my experience I caused observations to be taken last Sunday, and ascertained that over 300 people went to the National Gallery shortly after 2 o'clock on that day, and naturally met with the same reception as I did; and I do not know whether they derived any consolation from the fact that they were probably informed that, though they could not visit the National Gallery, nevertheless the Geological Museum was open for their inspection. The anomaly to which I refer consists in this, that whereas the National Gallery, the National Portrait Gallery, the Tate Gallery, and the Wallace Collection are all closed on Sundays during five months of the year, the British Museum, the South Kensington Museum, the Natural History Museum, the Bethnal Green Museum, and that institution to which I have just referred, the Geological Museum, are open all the year round. I am entirely unable to understand by what process any person has been able to differentiate between the respective claims of these various institutions as regards Sunday opening. I have heard it suggested that the reason the establishments I have mentioned are closed is on account of the absence of artificial light. But to me that is an entirely unconvincing explanation, because those institutions which are open on Sundays are only open from 2 p.m. until dusk, and it is hardly necessary to point out that daylight is precisely the same on Sunday as it is on a week-day. The question of artificial light cannot possibly arise, because on really foggy and dark days I believe all those institutions are closed.

It cannot be pleaded as an excuse for keeping certain of these institutions closed that the public shows no inclination to visit them. As a matter of fact, the Sunday opening of museums and galleries has been an absolutely unqualified success, and I do not think anybody at the present day would venture to assert that it was other than a universal benefit. I believe that, roughly, 400,000 people visit the public galleries and museums in London in the course of the year, and the average Sunday attendance really amounts to a considerable figure. For instance, the average number of visitors at the South Kensington Museum on Sundays is 1,755; at the British Museum, 1,110; at the Natural History Museum, 1,176; at the National Gallery, 1,450. It is no argument to say that the same proportion of people would not visit these institutions during the winter months, because if anybody will take the trouble to refer to the figures they will see that in proportion to the time, just as many people visit those galleries which are open during the winter months as is the case in the summer time, and it seems to me only natural that they should do so at a time of the year when open air pursuits are less attractive. As a matter of fact, the galleries which are constantly open are under direct Government control, and all the galleries I have mentioned which are closed during certain months, are managed by trustees. Personally, I should be the last person to bring any sort of charge against those trustees. I believe them to be all, without exception, highly enlightened persons. I see several of them sitting in the House at the present moment; and the inference which I draw is that the obstacle to the proposed all-the-year-round opening must proceed from the Treasury. I cannot account for it in any other way, and I would like to point out that if I am correct in this inference it is really an objection of an extremely trifling character.

I understand that on Sundays the work of the ordinary attendants is discharged by police. These police, in the case, for instance, of the National Gallery, amount possibly to fifteen or twenty, all told. I do not think I am exaggerating when I say, therefore, that the expense of keeping the National Gallery open on Sundays could not possibly amount to more than, say, £7 or £8 per day. It is, therefore, obvious that for an additional expenditure of something like £40 a month, less than £200 a year, the National Gallery could be kept open during the entire year; and it is equally obvious that the other galleries I have mentioned, which are now closed, could, being smaller establishments, be kept open at a still smaller expense. I venture to think that expense must really be the sole obstacle in the way, because what is called Sabbatarianism is really dead; and you could not have any more convincing proof of that than the fact that the National Gallery of Edinburgh is actually open during every Sunday in the year, possibly owing to the influence of my noble friend on the cross benches. But in any case there is no obstacle now put in the way of anybody who desires rationally to amuse himself on a Sunday. In all parts of London, people can now hear most admirable concerts at an extremely trifling charge. They can, if they wish to do such things, indulge in the more doubtful amusement of listening to lectures by more or less distinguished people; and, from a correspondence which has recently appeared in the Press, I observe that members of certain political clubs are able to enjoy advantages which are denied to many other persons. I would venture to ask the House whether it is not somewhat ludicrous that our finest art collections should remain closed, whilst so many opportunities for recreation remain available? That being so, and it being, as I am convinced, a pure oversight on the part of somebody who has not yet pressed the Treasury sufficiently hard, I cannot help hoping that, whoever is going to answer for His Majesty's Government, will reply in a favourable sense, and that this anomaly will shortly cease to exist.

THE EARL OF CARLISLE: My Lords, before the noble Lord who represents the Treasury replies, I should like to be allowed, as the oldest member of the Board of Trustees of the National Gallery, to say a few words. I am sorry I cannot speak in the name of the Board, because it has not met since the noble Lord placed his Question on the Paper; but I have been able to consult the director and the majority of my colleagues, and I can say that the noble Lord is perfectly right in his statement that we are most anxious not to put any opposition in the way of the further opening of the National Gallery. I should like to say, by the way, that the National Gallery is open for a considerably longer time every day than any other gallery in Europe. That, however, is no reason why it should not be open on a larger number of Sundays than at present. I should like to tell your Lordships very briefly the history of the matter. In 1896, when the Resolution of the House of Commons was passed, the Gallery was opened on Sundays from May to September from three to six o'clock. In 1897, another month was added, and it was open for six months on Sundays; and in 1898 it was open for seven months. I quite think it desirable that the time should be increased. The objection that was made before was that as the Gallery was not opened until two o'clock in the afternoon and dusk fell very early in the winter, it was not worth while to give a whole day's pay for what would be not more than two hours' work. But that argument does not apply to two additional months, at all events—the months of March and November. Speaking for myself, I confess I should prefer to see the Gallery open for the whole year if the Treasury would give the additional money necessary. The cost at present, in the case of the National Gallery, is £217 a year, and for the whole year the cost would be £365, which is not a very extravagant sum for giving a great deal of additional pleasure. As far as the Board of Trustees are concerned, there is, no doubt, we shall attempt to get the Treasury to enable us to give increased facilities in this direction.

Lord DENMAN: My Lords, it is a matter of very deep regret to myself that such prominent institutions as the National Gallery, the National Portrait Gallery, and the Tate Gallery, should have been so unfortunate as to incur the displeasure of my noble friend Lord Newton. He is, however, entirely inaccurate in the inference he draws that the Treasury is responsible for this particular state of things. Lord Carlisle, who is, I believe, the oldest trustee of the National Gallery, is entitled to speak with greater authority on this question than, perhaps, any other Member of your Lordships' House, and I think he will bear me out when I say that it is impossible for the Treasury to act unless approached in this matter, first of all, by the trustees of the institutions in question. A similar point was raised in the House of Commons during the tenure of office of the late Government, and was answered by Mr. Hayes Fisher, who pointed out that, owing to the frequent deficiency of daylight on winter afternoons and the fact that in any case the time during which pictures could be seen was very short, it was not considered worth while, in the absence of artificial light, to keep the galleries open all the year round on Sundays; and as to the introduction of artificial light he said that, at all events in the case of the National Gallery and the National Portrait Gallery, the trustees entertained a strong objection, apart from the question of expense, and he was not prepared to press them on the point. I should like to add that it may be necessary, if the galleries are to be opened all the year round, to install the electric light, with the consequent increased risk of fire, and that various structural alterations would have to be taken into consideration. The Treasury, however, will entertain any proposal put forward by the trustees of these institutions.

*The Marquess of LANSDOWNE: My Lords, as a colleague of Lord Carlisle I can corroborate what he has already said on this subject. The trustees are in favour of giving as many facilities to the public as they possibly can, and I have no doubt my noble friend who put this Question on the Paper will remember that if it had not been for the action of the trustees twelve years ago, the National Gallery, at any rate, might still be closed. When we had to consider the extent to which the Gallery might be opened on Sundays there were two limits to be taken into consideration. There was, in the first place, the limit of daylight: now the opening hour on Sunday seems to have been taken—I do not know exactly why, but I imagine in consequence of the House of Commons Resolution—as two o'clock, and I suggest to your Lordships that there are unfortunately certain periods of the year when in London, at any rate, the amount of daylight after two o'clock in the afternoon is so insignificant as to render it scarcely worth while to open between 2 p.m. and the hour when twilight sets in. Of course, if you come to the question of introducing artificial light, you open up a very much larger question. I do not think my noble friend intended to raise that.

LORD NEWTON: No.

*THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: The other limit arises out of financial considerations. My noble friend talked airily about an extra expenditure of £200 per annum. I think the House is aware that the National Gallery does not enjoy a very extravagant subsidy from public funds, and we do have to consider rather carefully how we spend £200 or any other appreciable sum of money. But I do not see why some arrangement should not be made whereby the Gallery might be thrown open for a longer period of the year. The trustees are likely to hold their monthly meeting before long, and we shall then certainly consider what has been proposed by my noble friend, and, if necessary, approach the Treasury on the subject. Now one word in regard to the attitude of the Treasury. I do not think the Treasury has been quite so neutral in the matter as the noble Lord opposite seems to suppose. I have a very distinct recollection that when this matter was first broached and we applied to the Treasury for a slight increase in our staff in order to enable us to open the Gallery on Sundays, we encountered considerable difficulty; at last, as a solution, it was suggested to us that police constables might be employed for this purpose during a certain part of the year. We accepted that as the best arrangement obtainable, but it was made very apparent to us indeed that the question of the cost of opening on Sundays was a consideration which my Lords of the Treasury would not leave out of account.

LORD JOICEY: Can the noble Lord give the House any idea of the number of visitors to the National Gallery on Sundays?

THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: About 1,400.

LORD NEWTON: I do not wish to prolong this discussion, but I should like to explain that there is no question of asking the trustees of the National Gallery or any other gallery to instal the electric light. We are only asking them to do what is done in the case of other galleries in the same position, and therefore any additional cost which would be necessary would be merely paid for attendants.

LORD DENMAN: Will the noble Lord say exactly what are the hours on which he would like these galleries opened on Sundays throughout the year?

LORD NEWTON: The same hours as prevail in the case of the galleries which are now open all the year round—that is to say, from two to 4 o'clock during December and January. After January the time could gradually be prolonged until you got to six or seven o'clock in the evening. When I went to the National Gallery the other Sunday it was light until six o'clock. There was, therefore no reason why the Gallery should not have been available to the public for three hours at least on that day, without the slightest necessity for artificial light.

AFFAIRS IN THE ISLAND OF VATERSAY.

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN rose to call attention to the recently published correspondence between Lady Cathcart and the Secretary for Scotland and the Lord Advocate, and to the present condition of affairs in the Island of Vatersay.

The noble Earl said—My Lords, I venture to hope that your Lordships have looked into the correspondence which has been laid on the Table, and I think those of our Lordships who have done so will be of opinion that it has repaid perusal. It affords an illustration of the condition of affairs which prevails at the present time in part of the western islands of Scotland, and of the manner and customs of the present Scottish Office and of the sense which they entertain of the responsibilities attaching to them in relation to the protection and defence of property. The correspondence is somewhat long and voluminous, but I shall endeavour to tell your Lordships my story in the way of narrative as far as possible, though I shall, of necessity, I regret to say, be obliged to read certain passages from several documents. Let me, then, proceed to my story.

Lady Cathcart is a lady who is possessed of very large property in Scotland. Her property is situated in several parts of that country. She has property on the east coast, but, to her misfortune, she also has property in the western islands which has caused her a great deal of anxiety and trouble. Lady Cathcart has discharged the duties of ownership in the very highest and most dignified form. There is no one, with the possible exception of the Lord Advocate, who would state or insinuate that her ladyship has in any way failed in her duties as an owner. She has poured out her money most lavishly, and in regard to the particular part of her property which is in question to-night she has done everything that the most munificent owner could possibly have done. In the Island of Barra she built a harbour, set up curing establishments, and endeavoured to promote the welfare of the place as a station for fishing, for, in her opinion, after a long experience both on the western and eastern coasts, she thought this likely to prove the most lucrative employment for the inhabitants. In this, and in many other ways, she has poured out money without end. She has also endeavoured to act in harmony with the Congested Districts Board, and in course of that action, though sometimes against her own judgment, she has laid out in crofts large portions of this island, not always with very lucrative results to herself or even with benefit to those for whom it was done.

Your Lordships will find an instance on the last two pages of this Return—the farm of Glendale. In that instance the Congested Districts Board asked Lady Cathcart to divide the farm into crofts. She replied that she knew it was not suited for the purpose. They insisted, however, and the result was that her ladyship gave way and removed the tenant. Then finally, when the experiment came to be tried, it proved, as Lady Cathcart anticipated, a failure. But what was the result? Lady Cathcart was left with this farm on her hands and to get out of her loss in the best way she could. Her ladyship has also endeavoured to work in harmony with the present Secretary for Scotland, and in the case which I am going to lay before your Lordships you will see from the correspondence that she did everything in her power to accept a plan to which she was confessedly opposed acting on her own judgment and her own experience; and it was only when the Secretary for Scotland refused to agree to the most ordinary terms—although the plan was his, he called upon her to provide the compensation for the tenant who was to lose his farm—that she ceased to be able to meet him.

In the island of Barra her property consists of about 22,000 acres, and, whereas when she came into the property a large portion was in the hands of farmers, there is now only one farm in existence, and it is the farm of which we are speaking to-night, the farm of Vatersay. I need not say, in regard to a Highland property of this kind, that it is not a lucrative affair and that the arrears are very large. I will not trouble your Lordships with the details except this, that the man who at the present time is the leader of the raiders who have seized the island of Vatersay—a man named Duncan Campbell—had a share for ten years, from 1891 to 1901, of a grazing called Kentangaval, which he held at an annual rent, fixed by the Congested Districts Board, of £2, and when he left at the end of that period what do your Lordships suppose his arrears were? They amounted to £19 out of the £20. During those ten years he made a payment of one sovereign only, and this is the man who is now in quest of new land, and who, in common with all the others, says he is prepared to pay rent. They promise to pay rent, but it is a mere figure of speech.

Now let us go on to the story contained in these Papers. The first matter alluded to is the seizing of the farm of Bornish in South Uist by cottars in the year 1906. Your Lordships will find it on pages 28 to 32 of Appendix I. I wish to lay stress on the fact that it is not crofters who seize the land but cottars; and perhaps I may, for the benefit of some of your Lordships, state in a few words what this cottar system is. The cottars are, for the most part, the children of crofters, and, with the connivance of their parents, they build upon the paternal croft houses in defiance of all rules and of all common sense, and when it proves impossible to find subsistence for themselves and their families, because they, in turn, marry, they have to take themselves to some other occupation, and where it is not fishing it has taken the turn, lately at all events, of seizing land. On 21st February of that year these cottars seized the farm of Bornish, and Lady Cathcart's agents wrote to the Government expressing the hope that they would take immediate steps to preserve the public peace, and pointing out that the public authorities ought to prosecute the offenders under the Trespass Act, more especially as the Procurator-Fiscal was the only person who could put the Act in motion. On 22nd March, Mr. Sinclair, the Secretary for Scotland, replied—page 29—that after careful consideration he was not satisfied that the provisions of the Act could be properly set in motion in this case. He said—

> "Questions of the assertion of a right to traverse or occupy heritable subjects fall to be tested in the Civil Courts by way of interdict, and it is only when a breach of that interdict occurs that criminal proceedings follow."

Let me observe, once and for all, that throughout the whole of these proceedings the cottars have never claimed any right to the possession of the land, and, indeed, in the petition which they are now presenting to the Courts in Edinburgh with regard to another matter they state positively that they do not lay any claim to the land, but that they have been obliged to seize it from necessity. Of course, against this refusal of the authorities to act Lady Cathcart's agents protested. The Trespass Act of 1865 provides that—

> "Every person who lodges in any premises or occupies or encamps on any land, being private property, without the consent and permission of the owner or legal occupier . . . shall be guilty of an offence punishable as hereinafter provided."

And in Section 5 occur these words—

> "Every prosecution shall be raised and proceeded in at the expense of the Procurator-Fiscal, and every such prosecution shall be commenced within one month after the offence has been committed."

On 10th April, page 32, the Secretary for Scotland repeated his refusal. The letter from the Scottish Office states that—

> "Mr. Sinclair has again given his best consideration to the arguments advanced in your letter, but I am to state that, as advised, he adheres to the view that the Trespass Act of 1865 does not apply, and certainly was never intended to apply, to such a case as this. The provision in Section 5 that prosecution shall be commenced within one month after the offence is committed demonstrates that the statute was never meant to apply to continuous occupation of land."

In the first place, what does the Secretary for Scotland or anybody else know as to the intentions when that Act was passed? And what does it signify what the intentions were at that time? The Act speaks for itself, and it has to be interpreted by the Courts.

The Act states positively that any person who occupies land without the consent of the owner is liable to punishment, and when Mr. Sinclair says that the provision in Section 5 that prosecution shall be commenced within one month after the offence is committed demonstrates that the statute was never meant to apply to continuous occupation of land, what in the world does he mean? It is surely an extraordinary doctrine that by continuously occupying land an offender is freed from the criminal law. "Continuous occupation of land" seems to be a mere euphemism of the Secretary for Scotland for filibustering. A filibusterer is only to be removed after a process involving several months delay and considerable expense to the owner. Lady Cathcart's agent then wrote to say that as the Government refused to put the criminal law in force she very reluctantly must apply for an interdict, and she did so apply. But on 9th May—and this is an important communication, omitted, I do not know why, from the correspondence presented to Parliament—Mr. Sinclair wrote a letter in which he did his best, having refused to act himself, to deprecate any action on the part of Lady

Cathcart. Lady Cathcart's agents had written asking for police protection in serving the action for interdict, and the Under-Secretary, writing on behalf of the Secretary for Scotland, under date 9th May, said—

> "That such action as is now contemplated,"

—the serving of the notices on the raiders—

> "should be taken pending the introduction of legislation which is under the consideration of the Government involves serious responsibility, and I am to point out that that responsibility must be held to lie with Lady Cathcart and her advisers."

Having refused to act himself, he says: "For goodness sake, don't do anything; wait for my legislation." I venture to think that if Lady Cathcart were to wait for legislation she would wait some years. Lady Cathcart eventually obtained an interdict in the course of May. This interdict was obeyed by the cottars. That ends the first scene in the first act.

Now let us come to Vatersay. Early in June, 1906, some cottars took cattle over in boats and landed them on the island of Vatersay. Lady Cathcart's agents again urged prompt action, with, needless to say, the same result. They received a reply that the remedy lay with the owner. Ultimately, however, at the instance of the Sheriff of Inverness, who was sent to the island on 7th July by the Secretary for Scotland, an arrangement was come to under which the cottars were to remove the cattle, and on this Lady Cathcart's agents undertook not to take any further action in the immediate future. Needless to say the removal of the cattle has never been carried out, and there they remain at this moment, with a great many other cattle besides. Emboldened by this, early in the year 1907 some cottars landed in Vatersay. They asserted no claim to the land but they seized upon a portion of the farm, began to erect houses, and, when challenged, said they had come to stay, and there would be more besides them. Of course it was useless to apply any more for the criminal law to be put in force, and so on 4th April, 1907, Lady Cathcart obtained an interdict against these men. The notices were served but no answers were sent, and so the interdict was confirmed, but on 17th May—Page 33 of the Papers—the Sheriff visited Vatersay

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and submitted a Report to Mr. Sinclair, to which I must for a moment allude. He arrived there on 17th May and saw the men of whom I spoke just now; he wrote down Duncan Campbell's *ex parte* statement, and then, in the course of his Report, he says he endeavoured to induce the men to go back; and he proceeds—page 35—

> "My efforts proved unavailing. It seemed to me that there were influences at work which were not fully disclosed and which I could not effectually deal with."

Now comes the most important point. The Sheriff adds—

> "I was assured that Lady Cathcart in the end would not use the 'lash' of the law. Their firm conviction, based on past experience, was that she would not be a party to imprisoning them or evicting them; further, that the Government would not allow them to suffer."

My Lords, that is the idea which unfortunately has got into the heads of these men. The Sheriff suggested that unless Lady Cathcart was permitted to go on with her interdict the only thing to do was for the Government to buy the island.

Now comes an interlude which seems to me to be well worthy of your Lordships' notice. On 6th August this matter was alluded to in the House of Commons. Mr. Balfour said he had reason to believe that the Crofters Acts were not working with so much success as was supposed in parts of the western islands. The Lord Advocate challenged him to name a part, and the right hon. Gentleman replied—

> "Are there no difficulties in Barra?"

And this is what the Lord Advocate proceeded to say—

> "In the whole of the jurisdiction over which my rule as Lord Advocate extends there has been absolute peace except in one small portion the Island of Barra, owned by one proprietor who has been unfortunate in his relations with his tenants."

I put stress on those words, because I shall have to refer to them later. The Lord Advocate ought properly, of course, to have said "her" tenants, because there was no other person except Lady Cathcart to whom this could possibly apply. What these tenants of Barra—they were not tenants, they were cottars—longed for, said the Lord Advocate, was land with security of tenure, and more land where their plots were too small. As a matter of fact, they had no plots. The Lord Advocate proceeded—

> "These poor tenants of Barra stepped across to the island of Vatersay, and on the shore planted a few potatoes, hoping to return in the spring to reap what little crop there was. To the best of his recollection that was the terrible offence that was committed."

The Lord Advocate added that he was asked to treat this as an offence against the criminal law, but it was a question of disputed civic possession—it was nothing of the kind— for, he said, these people claimed that they had rights on this barren shore. They never had any rights, and they have just pleaded in the Courts that they have none.

When a private Member makes a statement and is met with a direct contradiction by an official, he naturally gives in, supposing that the official has some justification or some authority for what he has said. The most charitable assumption that one can make is that the Lord Advocate did not know what he was talking about, because at that very time—he was speaking in the month of August—these people were on the ground. They had been there since the latter part of the previous February. They did not row away hoping to return in the spring to reap a crop of potatoes. They were there, they had built houses, they had cattle, and these matters had been reported at the Scottish Office during several months. Yet in the face of that the Lord Advocate made the statement I have referred to. The only charitable thing to suppose—and it is very difficult to suppose it—is that he did not know what he was talking about.

The next thing that occurred was on 5th September, when the Secretary for Scotland wrote to Lady Cathcart strongly advising her, as the only means of settling this question, to divide up the island of Vatersay into crofts—that is to say, he advised her to break her lease with her tenant, and divide the land among the very people who had raided it. The letter appears on page 4. The Under-Secretary wrote—

> "Mr. Sinclair instructs me to say that in his view the best course now open is for the proprietor to clear up the doubts which seem to exist as to the water resources of Vatersay, and, having done that, to arrange for its settlement by the number of families which may properly be settled there."

He added—

> "Mr. Sinclair is well aware that Barra Vatersay situation is trying and difficult for everybody involved, for none more so than for the proprietor. He regrets greatly to think of her anxieties."

If his thoughts had only taken a little more practical turn, it would have been more to the purpose. He goes on to say he is well aware that she is genuinely and deeply concerned about the welfare of the people, and there is a lot more flattery of that sort; and then Mr. Sinclair adds that he will be most willing to co-operate with her in every possible way. Of course, Lady Cathcart knew quite well, from her own experience, that to take this course would be the most unfortunate thing possible, and her agents represented this to the Secretary for Scotland. Still, in her anxiety to co-operate with him she offered, very reluctantly and against her own judgment, either to sell the land to him or to give it to the Congested Districts Board for them to settle in such a manner as they should choose, provided, of course that they were to compensate her tenant. Mr. Sinclair replied that he could not accept the idea of purchase at all. He told her that this plan was her plan and not his, and was to be carried out by her; and, moreover, that the compensation to her tenant was to be paid by her and not by the Government who were insisting upon her ousting her tenant. Naturally there was another protest, and on 7th November—Page 12—Mr. Sinclair definitely refused to do anything in the way of compensation. The Scottish Office wrote—

> "In regard to the surrender of the lease, Mr. Sinclair cannot enter into any obligations either in the matter of negotiation or of compensation. The former must be conducted by Lady Cathcart"—

that is to say, she was to have all the trouble—

> "and the cost of the latter, if any, must be defrayed by her."

Did your Lordships ever hear of such a proposal?

Supposing Lady Cathcart had, for her own purposes, ousted her tenant or terminated the lease, she would have been obliged to pay compensation to the tenant. Mr. Sinclair in this case was practically evicting her tenant. Why was Lady Cathcart and not Mr. Sinclair to pay the compensation? Your Lordships cannot be surprised that, in those circumstances, the negotiations broke down; and Mr. Sinclair, in a characteristic letter, with which I will not trouble your Lordships, at the end rather intimated that it was her fault. I have cut the correspondence down to the very minimum, but if your Lordships will read it for yourselves you will be perfectly amazed at the proposals which were made to Lady Cathcart and the ignorance of the Scottish Office on all matters relating to a farm of this kind. Now what has been the result of this correspondence? In the first place the cottars are still in Vatersay. They went there in February of last year in defiance of the owner. Mr. Sinclair did not interfere. They have defied the interdict of the Court, and at the present moment there are more than fifty of them encamped close to the house of this unfortunate tenant. Just imagine the position of that unfortunate man: His sheep are naturally mixed up with their cattle and are driven about in any way the cottars choose. Mr. Sinclair appears to have only one idea in this matter, and that is how to shirk responsibility.

Let me come to the Lord Advocate. What is the Lord Advocate's aim? I called your Lordships' attention just now to the fact that the Lord-Advocate alluded to Lady Cathcart as an owner who was unfortunate in "his" relations with "his" tenants. Just let us see how the Lord Advocate behaved in this matter. I refer your Lordships to pages 25 to 27. Lady Cathcart, whose friends had pointed out to her that she was evidently the object of the Lord Advocate's attack, wrote to him, and received a reply in which the Lord Advocate said—

> "I fear that you are importing into the expression used by me something which is derogatory to yourself, and which was quite foreign to the subject or purpose, and I beg of you to disabuse your mind entirely of such ideas. The topic into which I was suddenly plunged was being dealt with solely on its public side. It was not part of the matter to deal out or apportion blame to individuals"—

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Then why did he do it?—

> "And you may take it from me absolutely that all the inferences, 'implications,' etc., of personal reflections on your Ladyship, as unfolded in your communication, are quite unwarranted."

What consolation was that to Lady Cathcart? She naturally asked the Lord Advocate if he would make a public statement to this effect in Parliament, but Parliament was subsequently prorogued without any such statement having been made. When Lady Cathcart wrote complaining that no such statement had been made to correct the false impression created, the Lord Advocate replied—

> "As to whether any further public statement shall be made by me, that will, of course, largely depend on the requirements of the public service."

As was to be imagined, the public service has not required the Lord Advocate to make any further statement, and therefore, his calumnious insinuation remains unwithdrawn, and I suppose the Lord Advocate is congratulating himself on having, in such an honourable manner, got out of the difficulty.

Now what about the subsequent events, because these matters which I have been relating could not help having a very serious effect in the Western Islands. At the end of February last some cottars seized upon a farm at Barra which Lady Cathcart sometime ago sold to a tenant named MacGillivray. They stated, in a letter to the Secretary for Scotland, that they had seized this land, and went on to ask his advice as to how they should proceed in connection with these operations. Mr. Sinclair, in his reply, gave them one of those solemn warnings the effect of which your Lordships can all appreciate for yourselves. That is not the only thing that has happened. And now we are getting a little nearer home. Encouraged by what has taken place the cottars propose to seize a farm at Kilmuir, which belongs to the Congested Districts Board. They say they are obliged to seize this land, and they add that they wish—

> "To get possession in October without further trouble."

If Mr. Sinclair is still in office in October next, I shall be curious to know what he does in this case. He has no Lady

Cathcart on whom to shift responsibility. Will he put the criminal law in force? I presume not. Then it will be very interesting to see whether he embarks on interdicts and so on, and whether those interdicts, if obtained, are subsequently obeyed.

And now, what about the future of Vatersay? He would be a bold man who would prophesy what is going to be the future of Vatersay if this Government continues in office. If there is one thing which this correspondence makes certain in regard to that matter it is that Mr. Sinclair has no fixed ideas—I am not sure that he has any idea at all—as to what is going to take place on that island. I think I have told your Lordships the whole of this story, but there is a curious resemblance between the proceedings of this Government in Ireland and their proceedings in Scotland. In both places persons who are engaged in ordinary, legal occupations, which they have every right to pursue, find themselves in this difficulty, that either their land or their cattle is seized. Ministers use the same sort of language in both cases. They regret the violation of the law, they itch to punish the offenders, but they do not do so. We do not do things by halves in Scotland, and whereas in Ireland the inhabitants only drive cattle down the road the cottars to whom I have referred take the land and stay there and defy anybody to remove them. I would remind your Lordships that it is only very lately that Mr. Sinclair founded his Scottish Bill on the great success of the crofting system in Scotland. He proposed to spread the crofter laws and the crofter tenure to the whole of Scotland. I wonder whether this is one of the instances—because he has given us none—that he had in his mind when he made this proposal to Parliament. I leave it to your Lordships to consider each one for himself what would be the probable future of Scotland if the crofter tenure and the crofter laws were established throughout the whole of that country, and if the present Scottish Secretary were still administering the law. The experiment has been tried on the unfortunate Lady Cathcart. I am very thankful to think, at all events for the present, we are not going to have that experiment tried all over Scotland.

LORD HERSCHELL: My Lords, I shall endeavour, as far as possible, to make clear the point of view of the Scottish Office on the correspondence which we have before us. I think your Lordships will probably agree that this discussion was, to say the least, inadvisable until the answers to the complaint for breach of interdict had been received; and I cannot help feeling that it is, perhaps, questionable whether the discussion will be of advantage, in view of the fact that the case is still *sub judice.* It is, therefore, I think, undesirable that a leaning should be expressed either to one side or the other. To continue the history of the interdict which the noble Earl began, the position at present is this. On 15th January, of this year——

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN: I am sorry to interrupt the noble Lord, but what has this action for breach of interdict to do with the occupation of land? The two things are perfectly distinct and separate.

LORD HERSCHELL: I think I shall be able to explain that point. I am merely pointing out, to begin with, the present state of affairs, and I shall subsequently show that there were open to Lady Cathcart two courses of which interdict was one. The complaint for breach of interdict against all the persons previously interdicted was presented to the Court of Session on 15th January this year; the complaint was duly served on the respondents, and answers were lodged by them on 18th February last. The Court heard the parties on the answers on Wednesday, 11th March, and ordered the respondent, to appear at the Bar of the Court on 19th May. I mention this to show that this portion of the case is still *sub judice.* It is worthy of note that throughout the whole of the proceedings the respondents have made no attempt to evade or prevent the service of the various writs of the Court, and, so far, therefore, there has been no need for any exceptional measures on the part of the

Government to enforce the law, which has, up to now, followed its usual course.

The whole question turns on this—Is the Government responsible for the present state of things in the island of Vatersay? It is said that the Government ought to have applied the Trespass Act of 1865. That is, of course, a legal point. But in similar cases hitherto that Act has never been applied; and, as a matter of fact, no Government has so far ever intervened except when deforcement of the officers of the Court acting under interdict proceedings has taken place. This has certainly not occurred in the present instance. The case for Lady Gordon Cathcart is founded throughout on the assumption that the responsibility must rest with the Government, and it is on this assumption alone that her claim can be justified that the Government should intervene to settle the matter, either by purchasing the farm of Vatersay and dividing it among those who require land or by financing a scheme of settlement on a non-purchase basis. The Scottish Office have maintained throughout this correspondence that the Government is in no sense responsible for the difficulties in which Lady Gordon Cathcart finds herself involved; and they have refused to consider a scheme of purchase. After all, such a scheme might have a very curious effect. Might it not in future tend to induce an owner of land who was desirous of selling his property to allow unauthorised persons to occupy that land, and so force the Government to buy it? Again, might it not tend to induce unauthorised persons to occupy land which they had no right to occupy? The position of the Scottish Office throughout has been that it is for Lady Gordon Cathcart herself to make a settlement. This she could do by one of two methods. She could apply to the Courts to remove the settlers by interdict, though it is true that that procedure is rather cumbersome; but we are not discussing the excellence, or the contrary, of Scottish law this evening. This was the course which was finally adopted by Lady Cathcart. The other course open to her was to ease the situation by providing land for the settlers. With regard to this latter course, the Government have stated their willingness to assist her in such a settlement through the Congested Districts Board, provided that they approved of the scheme. But in doing so, they in no sense accept responsibility for the disturbance, nor do they accept the full financial responsibility for the settlement which the advisers of Lady Gordon Cathcart have endeavoured to force upon them. This question of responsibility for the disturbances seems to go to the root of the matter, and it is on this ground that the Government have adopted the point of view which I have endeavoured to explain to your Lordships.

Lord LOVAT: I would like to ask whether I am correct in thinking that the noble Lord said that Lady Cathcart insisted on sale; that she would only take purchase?

Lord HERSCHELL: No, I did not say that.

Lord LOVAT: That was certainly the impression which the noble Lord's statement made on several noble Lords on this side.

Lord HERSCHELL: What I said was that she insisted on terms which the Government could not accept.

The Earl of CAMPERDOWN: She insisted on their paying the tenant compensation. Those were the terms the Government would not accept.

Lord LOVAT: In the letter from Lady Cathcart's agents which appears on page 8 of the Paper it is stated that—

> "Lady Cathcart reiterates her offer to sell to the Congested Districts Board, which the holds to be the proper course; or reluctantly, as an alternative directly suggested by the Secretary for Scotland, she would invite the Congested Districts Board to arrange for the settlement of the farm of Vatersay on reasonable conditions."

I think that shows quite clearly that Lady Cathcart was prepared to meet the Secretary for Scotland in the matter. But could the terms which the Secretary for Scotland offered be considered reasonable from Lady Cathcart's point of view? I ask your Lordships to turn for a moment to page 9, where you will see that even such terms as were offered were immediately afterwards withdrawn by the Secretary for Scotland. He wrote—

> "Again, upon the extent of land to be newly occupied will depend the loss of letting value of the farm, for which compensation will be paid by the Congested Districts Board."

That seems to me very simple English, and I take it to mean that if there were a loss of letting value the Congested Districts Board would make it up to Lady Cathcart. But at a later stage of the correspondence—page 18—Mr. Sinclair makes a complete *volte face.* He says—

> "The Government is not prepared to assume responsibility for such part of the farm (if there be any, as may be the case) as is not devoted to the purposes of this scheme."

That may very easily be a large portion of the farm. It was disputed whether there was any water to be got on the island at all in a dry summer, and if there was no water a large portion of the farm could not profitably be occupied by crofters. On the question of water, again, we see a somewhat curious dealing on the part of the Scottish Office. In the letter on page 8, Mr. Sinclair states that he desires to do his utmost to ensure that the inquiry as to the condition of the water supply should be conducted in such a way as to be authoritative and convincing to all concerned; but subsequently he says there shall be no such inquiry. I think that in the action she took, Lady Cathcart was acting as any sane individual would act. I ask your Lordships to consider for a moment who comes out in a better light—Lady Gordon Cathcart or His Majesty's Government? Who was it in this case wished to put the people on the land? Although she knew that the farm of Vatersay was most unadaptable for division, nevertheless she gave her consent, subject to the sitting tenant being compensated. If your Lordships will refer to page 40 you will see what the experience was in connection with the Glendale property. This farm, which extends to about 4,475 acres, was formerly rented at about £100. The property was made over to the Congested Districts Board, and all that the Congested Districts Board was able to lay out was 1,100 acres. Why? Because there were only 66 acres of arable land. The 1,100 acres were laid out in six holdings and a suitable common grazing. The crofters saw the land and were only able to offer a rent of £3 for each holding—that is, £18 for the portion of the farm which they were going to take up. According to Mr. Sinclair, the difference between the £18 and the £100 previously obtained is absolutely lost to the owner. In the case of Vatersay, where it was doubtful whether any water could be obtainable in a dry summer, the chances of getting adequate rent was even lower. I submit that it was most unfair to expect Lady Gordon Cathcart to bear the loss which would have resulted from the dispossession of the sitting tenant, and to establish these cottars on a part only of the farm.

*THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: My Lords, I desire to express my hope that before this discussion closes we shall obtain from noble Lords opposite some rather fuller explanation than that which was given to us by the noble Lord who spoke just now. If he will forgive me for saying so, he made what was in reality no defence. He suggested to us—it was almost the only argument which I caught—that there was something improper in this discussion taking place while proceedings were in progress before the Scottish Courts. Does the noble Lord really mean to suggest that while this procedure, which he himself described as clumsy, drags its slow length along, your Lordships are to be precluded from commenting on occurrences so grave in their character as those which Lord Camperdown has described?

The noble Lord made another somewhat singular contribution to the arguments. He told us that in the view of His Majesty's Government there was some risk that if proceedings in trespass were resorted to persons might be induced to occupy land in order to force the hand of the Government. I think that was his argument. What an astonishing conception! Do His Majesty's Government suggest that the unfortunate lady who is the victim of these occurrences has any desire to force their hand? No, my Lords, I think I may say of that unfortunate lady that if she is to find any consolation in these occurrences she must find it in this, that they have been the means of bringing before the public and before Parliament what I can only describe as invaluable illustrations of the working of the crofter system in remote parts of Scotland, and of what, for brevity, I must describe as the working of the Sinclair system—a system which is not peculiar to that Minister, but which has many well-qualified exponents among the members of His Majesty's Government.

There is, fortunately, very little dispute as to the actual facts of the case. As to the proprietrix, no one can contend that she has not dealt with her crofters for years past in the most considerate and generous fashion. That appears on every line of these Papers. There is no doubt as to that. She has surrendered to them large tracts of country, and if she retained the island of Vatersay it was in the belief, apparently perfectly well founded, that it was a barren and inhospitable place, with a doubtful water supply; I think, indeed, you will find that it is on record in these Papers that at one time an attempt was made to till it, but the report was that it was land upon which even potatoes could not be grown. So much for the part of her possessions which this lady, so generous and liberal in her dealings with her crofters, thought fit to retain her own possession.

Now we come to the action of the crofters—they are not crofters, by the way, but cottars. It is a very important distinction, because the cottar has not, like the crofter, statutory rights either in his own holdings or in the neighbouring land. These men set to work in a methodical fashion. They first made a reconnaissance in force; they crossed over the intervening sea, marked out certain parts of the island which they desired to possess, and subsequently sent out an expeditionary force which took possession of the land, cultivated it, erected buildings upon it, and, though an attempt was made to impound their cattle, the animals were, I believe, rescued. I do not think my noble friend used language of exaggeration when he applied to these proceedings the description of filibustering operations, and I do not think even in recent Irish annals you will find more high-handed conduct. I will not labour that, because I see that Mr. Sinclair, in a letter, describes the conduct of those persons as—

> "A defiance of the law which no Minister can do other than deplore and condemn."

Therefore there can be no doubt upon that point. This, it may be observed in passing, is exactly the language which is habitually used by Mr. Sinclair's Irish colleague when he is describing similar occurrences in other parts of the United Kingdom.

Let me summarise, in the fewest possible words, the acts of this drama. The proprietrix of the island appeals for protection and points out that the natural remedy is to set in motion the Trespass Act of 1865. She is then told that this is not a convenient remedy, and is referred to an Act of 1686. Now is not it extraordinary that on all these occasions His Majesty's Government invariably go back to some antiquated statute rather than have recourse to an enforcement of the more recent provisions of the law which lie ready to their hands? May I remind your Lordships that in the Irish cattle-driving case His Majesty's Government refused altogether to avail themselves of a recent statute passed for the purpose of dealing with these outbreaks, and gave preference to two Acts of the reign of Edward III. and William IV? But the practical suggestion of the Scottish Office was that Lady Gordon Cathcart should surrender at discretion. That was what it came to, and that is what I understood the noble Lord opposite to refer to when he said that in the view of His Majesty's Government what was really necessary was to do something to "ease the situation." That is an extremely simple manner of easing a situation. Then the proprietrix very naturally made a counter proposal. She said, "If these are your views, if you want this island for your *protegés*, take the island off my hands altogether. You shall have it on reasonable terms, with this stipulation, that His Majesty's Government shall make themselves responsible for compensating the tenant at the time in occupation of the Vatersay farm." That suggestion cannot have been a very unreasonable one, because I see that the Sheriff of Inverness, who presumably knows something about these matters—Page 36—suggested two modes of dealing with the difficulty, the second mode being this—

> "Let the Congested Districts Board either buy the whole island of Vatersay or such part of it as Lady Cathcart would part with on reasonable terms, so that they may give allotments. This might involve a capital expenditure of, say, between £6,000 and £8,000 and could, I suppose, only be contemplated if the island was reported on by a competent man suitable for the settlement of crofters as regards water supply."

Therefore, Lady Gordon Cathcart cannot, I think, be charged with unreasonableness in proposing a solution of the difficulty which commended itself to a public official writing presumably with considerable knowledge of the affairs of the neighbourhood. That proposal was refused.

Next the proprietrix, with reluctance made another counter proposal. Your Lordships will find it on page 8 of the correspondence. She invited the Secretary for Scotland to arrange with the Congested Districts Board to settle the island upon the following terms. The Board were to satisfy themselves as to the water supply, they were to arrange with the sitting tenant, they were to draw out a scheme of settlement, they were to agree that no person should be offered a croft unless he was a suitable and competent tenant, and that those persons already on the land who were neither suitable nor competent should be got rid of; and, finally, she proposed that the expenses of adaptation should be defrayed by the Board. That again, to my mind, was a well-considered and not unreasonable counter proposal, and Lady Gordon Cathcart accompanied it by an intimation that she remained of opinion as to the unwisdom, and even danger, of establishing a crofter settlement in Vatersay, and left the responsibility on Mr. Sinclair. That counter proposal was also ruled out, and the proprietrix was told that she was to undertake the task of removing the invaders, and to be responsible, if not for the whole, at any rate for a great part of the expense of compensating the tenant.

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN: The whole of the expense.

*THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: The whole of the expense of compensating the tenant who was to be displaced. It is not surprising that Lady Gordon Cathcart should have hesitated to undertake the task which the Scottish Office thus desired to impose upon her. She had burnt her fingers before under similar circumstances. If your Lordships will look at page 10 of the correspondence you will find an account of another case which had arisen at a place called Glendale in which the same proprietrix was interested. It appears that the Congested Districts Board desired to convert the farm of Glendale into small holdings. Lady Gordon Cathcart, in order to facilitate matters, arranged with the tenant of Glendale to surrender his lease, but when they got to closer quarters with the question it was found that only a few small holdings could be carved out of the Glendale Farm, that the bulk of it was unsuitable for small holdings, with the result that the idea of dividing it into small holdings was abandoned, and Lady Gordon Cathcart had to take over the sheep stock and has not been able to find a tenant for the farm which is left on her hands. Can you be surprised, therefore, that this lady, having suffered in this way on a former occasion, should have been a little particular how she met the proposals made to her by the Scottish Office?

She, however, submitted yet another suggestion. She suggested that the Scottish Office should interview her tenant and try to arrive at some arrangement with him. That was refused, and there the story ended for the time. What is the result? Here you have an attempt to saddle a landowner, against whom nothing is alleged, of whom no complaint is made, whose record, indeed, is, as far as I am able to judge, an admirable one, with the task of turning out of his holding a tenant, against whom also nothing is alleged, in order to make room for what I can only describe as a gang of pirates—you do this with the full knowledge that if the island is to be divided up and settled by a crofter population, you will have to provide for them roads and schools and various other things which cost money, and to the cost of which the unlucky proprietrix will have to contribute. I say that is a grievous hardship. Meanwhile the pirates are still in possession, and we are without knowledge as to the policy which His Majesty's Government intend to adopt in this and similar cases.

Only one word more. The crown of this edifice seems to me to be reached when we arrive at that personal correspondence between the Lord-Advocate and Lady Gordon Cathcart which my noble friend quoted. My noble friend reminded the House of the manner in which these transactions were referred to in the House of Commons by the Lord Advocate. I say, unhesitatingly, that no one could have listened to the Lord Advocate's statement without deriving the impression that this lady had been a harsh and inconsiderate landlord, that her tenants had been hardly dealt with, and that they were objects of commiseration. Can we be surprised that Lady Cathcart should have challenged the statement of the Lord Advocate and should have asked for some explanation of it? I must say that a more scant, I would almost say scurvy, apology, if it be an apology, I never read in my life. The Lord Advocate, in his letter, endeavours to reassure Lady Cathcart by telling her that—

> "The inferences, implications, etc., of personal reflections on your Ladyship, as unfolded in your communication, are quite unwarranted."

But were they unreasonable inferences? I say the inferences which were drawn by all who listened to or read the Lord Advocate's language in the House of Commons were such as anyone would have drawn from similar language used by an official of the State; and when challenged, instead of unreservedly withdrawing his statements and expressing regret that he should have made them, he produces this long-delayed explanation, for the letter was ten days in his pocket before he took the trouble to answer it—an explanation not given in the House of Commons, where the charge had been made, but in a private letter, and in terms which I can only characterise as scarcely ingenuous. I trust that this discussion will direct attention to an affair which seems to me most discreditable to all concerned, except to the lady who has been the victim of these transactions. I hope we shall be told, at any rate, before this discussion closes, what is to be the policy of His Majesty's Government if similar occurrences again take place, whether they intend to connive at them in the future, and, if not, what means they propose to take to prevent disorders such as those which have arisen on the island of Vatersay from spreading to other parts of Scotland.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Lord TWEEDMOUTH): My Lords, I should like, in a very few words, to try and put a different colour upon the transactions in question, and I do so with the greater confidence because I am intimately acquainted with all that Lady Cathcart has done for her tenants. She has all her life been anxious to do everything in her power for her dependents, both in the East and West of Scotland. A great deal has been done by her in the way of harbour construction, and in the building of piers; she has done everything to encourage fishery enterprise, and has given as much land as possible to the crofters and small holders on her properties. Indeed, I am rather inclined to think that this difficulty has to some extent arisen out of her desire to make a compromise even in the case of Vatersay. I agree that the action of these men in going over to Vatersay cannot be stigmatised too strongly. They are not even crofters; they have no *status* at all; and their action has been monstrous. Vatersay is an island which does not come under the Congested Districts Board; it is not included under the operations of the Crofters Acts, and is in the occupation of a tenant. These men took possession of that island in two different raids and put their cattle upon it. I say that that was intolerable. But on the opposite side of the House noble Lords have taken an extreme line. You always want us to do something outside the ordinary law. This case was to be met by the ordinary law of Scotland.

*THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: Is not the Trespass Act the ordinary law?

LORD TWEEDMOUTH: No, not in Scotland. The law we are accustomed to use for trespass is the law of interdict. It is a very complete and effective remedy.

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN: A very long one.

LORD TWEEDMOUTH: There has been a great deal of talk about the negotiations that went on between the Secretary for Scotland and Lady Cathcart. I think Lady Cathcart has been very badly served by her agents. They made a great mess of it. If an interdict had been taken out at once and enforced, the trespassers would have been driven off the place. Instead of that, the agents put forward a number of proposals which were not accepted by the Secretary for Scotland and very naturally. Why should he use public money and pay £8,000 for an island which did not come within the Crofters Act? It was a monstrous proposal and could not be accepted by any Minister. I do not for one moment say that everything was done in the way it ought to have been on either side, but I repeat that the ordinary law could have dealt with the situation and ought to have been used by the parties concerned.

THE EARL OF ROSEBERY: My Lords, I must condole with my noble friend Lord Herschell on being at the very outset of his official career entrusted with so grotesque a brief by the Scottish Office as the *apologia* for this most lamentable correspondence. What were the arguments he was told to use on behalf of the Scottish Office? I must say they were rather signals of distress than arguments. He was told to say that the matter was one for which Lady Gordon Cathcart was responsible and in which the Scottish Office could not interfere. I imagine then from that that the Scottish Office considers that Lady Gordon Cathcart was at the bottom of the invasion of Vatersay, that she was responsible for the raid upon that island, and that it was for her to settle that affair as best she could. I am driven more forcibly to this conclusion by the second argument, which was so extraordinary that I very much doubt whether in either House of Parliament such a plea had ever been advanced—namely, that this system of squatting might be used by an unprincipled owner as a means of inducing the Government to purchase his property. I give you all the arguments used on any subject by any Minister at any time, and defy a parallel to be found for such a plea as my noble friend had to read probably in the handwriting of Mr. Sinclair or of the Lord Advocate.

Now I come to the voice of nature. uttered by the lips of my noble friend the First Lord of the Admiralty. He, at any rate, took a manly and generous line not to be found throughout this correspondence in regard to the behaviour of Lady Cathcart to her tenants. Lady Cathcart throughout this correspondence is treated as a sort of malefactor who ought to be treated with the utmost rigour of the law. She is one of the most beneficent landlords in Scotland and one entitled to the highest possible consideration by any Government, but his argument was in its own way not less remarkable than that of Lord Herschell. He said, what can be more preposterous than that the Government should purchase land outside and beyond the Crofter Act? How, he asked, in a tone almost broken by emotion, could you conceive such a thing as possible? But that was the very course suggested by the Secretary for Scotland. In this exceedingly elusive correspondence of this somewhat elusive Government, one is at a difficulty to find out what are the propositions on which they base their proceedings and what is the policy behind it all. They throw over their own correspondence, they disdain their own colleagues and anybody else, whether seated on the Opposition bench or simply an anxious and humble inquirer on the cross bench, who is left at a total loss to know what to do.

Let me take another point, to show how lightly the Government treat not only their own colleagues and their own correspondence, but their own legislation. A body of these squatters land upon an island on which a farm is under lease. It is proposed to disturb the tenant in the currency of his lease. The unfortunate Lady Gordon Cathcart has already had experience of this process. She has had to go through one of the most expensive proceedings known to agriculture—the purchase of acclimatised sheep—and as a reward she has found her farm left on her hands, the Congested Districts Board having nibbled at it, tasted it, and found it unsuitable. There she is with the expense on her shoulders, her money gone, and her farm taken. What does she propose to do? She proposes that an arrangement should be come to with the tenant, and that he should be compensated for disturbance. The Scottish Office raises unearthly shrieks at the very idea of compensation for disturbance. She only proposes compensation for disturbance under the Act passed by His Majesty's present advisers, the Agricultural Holdings Act of the year before last. It is compensation enacted by that Act which she says must be paid, and as she is not responsible for the disturbance she proposes that the Government should pay it. The First Lord of the Admiralty says it is an unheard-of proceeding, and the rivers would run backward in Scotland if anything of the kind were done.

There are two general considerations which I think are worthy of observation in this discussion. The first is that this extraordinary system of crofter districts is what it is proposed by His Majesty's Government to extend as the greatest of all imaginable blessings to the whole of Scotland. All I can say is that if this system of crofters, administered as it is by the Scottish Office with the encouragement of filibustering which naturally follows from this correspondence, is what we are to have, Scotland in a very short time will become a hell on earth. You cannot permit lawlessness in any part of His Majesty's dominions without its spreading. There is no such contagion, particularly among a semi-Celtic population, as the contagion of lawlessness. We are told that the common law of Scotland is impotent to put down lawlessness in any part of Scotland, that it is a slow and clumsy process, and that the law advisers of Lady Gordon Cathcart are greatly to be blamed for not having adopted that slow and cumbrous course though, as it appears, they actually did adopt it. It is very difficult to please His Majesty's Government.

I want to ask a question as to that. The Lord Advocate is the great law officer of Scotland who is responsible for the preservation of law and order in Scotland. Am I to be told that with a willing Lord-Advocate it is beyond the resources of law and order in Scotland for the Lord Advocate to preserve that law and order? If so, it is the greatest surprise that has come upon me in the course of my political career. The Scottish Office proposes to hatch the eggs of lawlessness in awaiting the legislation of which we have had a sample. When I came down to the House this evening I was only provided with the correspondence laid before Parliament. I was unaware of what had been the result. May I digress for one moment? My unfortunate friend Lord Herschell—whose connection with this affair has been ill-inspired all through, I will not say by whom, but I acquit him of any responsibility in the matter—was advised to tell Lord Camperdown, when he asked why these documents took two months printing, to say that they took so long because a number of illustrative documents were being prepared which would throw great light upon the matter. I never heard of an ordinary correspondence which required illustrative documents to explain it. If I may judge from the letters read both by Lord Lansdowne and by Lord Camperdown, the work of providing illustrative documents was inferior in pressure to the work of suppressing some of the most interesting letters of the whole series. I pass that point by. The correspondence is quite extraordinary enough as it is published without our wishing for any more illustrative documents.

Since we came to the House we have heard a little more about this business. We have heard that the contagion has already begun to spread, and it has spread unfortunately to an estate not owned by a private proprietor. If only an estate owned by a private proprietor were affected, that would be nothing. What are private proprietors? The dust of the earth. The Solicitor-General will tell you what he thinks of private proprietors. The contagion has extended actually to an estate owned by the Congested Districts Board—that is His Majesty's Government itself—and so we are brought to this most melancholy and deplorable conclusion, that His Majesty's Government is one of those proprietors who have been unfortunate in their relations with their tenants, and that therefore these "poor things" are invading the estate of His Majesty's Government. Well, my Lords, it will not stop with the Congested Districts Board estate if this lawlessness is allowed to continue. I am certain it is not merely bad for Lady Gordon Cathcart, but it is extremely bad for the population of the Highlands themselves. I hope if no other good comes of this very one-sided discussion it will at least bring home to the Government that in the ancient kingdom of Scotland we do expect law and order to be preserved. In Ireland, under circumstances I think less glaring, because there is not a permanent settlement in the case of Ireland, some hundreds of men have been added to the Irish Constabulary, which is at least a sign of grace and a sign of a wish to enforce the law. In Scotland we have nothing but this correspondence.

SECRETARIES TO COUNTY ASSOCIATIONS.

Lord HAVERSHAM: My Lords, I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for War whether it has been decided in the case of officers entitled to pensions under Article 510 of the Royal Warrant that the post of secretary to a County Association involves the loss of their pension.

The Earl of PORTSMOUTH: My Lords, in reply to the Question put to me by my noble friend, I am afraid it is impossible that the pension should be retained in such cases. These men are Regular officers who would not be entitled by their years of service to retiring pay or Regular Army pensions. In certain circumstances, however, the War Office allowed them to retire, on condition that they took a commission in the Militia or Yeomanry, and in return for that they received a retaining fee of £100, involving liability to come up for annual training and to be mobilised. The secretaryship of a County Association is practically a Civil appointment, and the holder of it could not fulfil these liabilities. For these reasons, as I have said, we have laid it down that a Militia officer cannot retain his £100 a year if he becomes a secretary of a County Association. As regards a Yeoman, we have not got a definite rule of that kind, but we say he must be seconded, and the effect is the same.

*The Marquess of LANSDOWNE: I am inclined to think the account which the noble Earl gave of the circumstances under which these so-called pensions were granted under Article 510 of the Royal Warrant was a perfectly correct account, and I can quite appreciate the view taken by the War Office. I understood the noble Earl to say that he regarded these secretaryships as of the nature of Civil appointments or approaching thereto. If they are appointments of that kind I do hope that the emoluments of the holders will be fixed at a figure having some relation to the duties to be discharged. The sum of £100, if that is the figure which the Army Council has in mind, seems to me to be one showing a wholly inadequate appreciation of the importance of the post.

The Earl of PORTSMOUTH: I do not think the Army Council have ever come to any decision as to what would be adequate remuneration. They have certainly not limited it to £100. I may add that the establishment grant for the various units has been raised. The effect of that, we hope, will be that in most counties there will be a sufficient sum of money to enable an adequate remuneration to be given to the secretary.

The Marquess of BATH: May I inquire whether the officers who become secretaries of Associations are merely seconded?

The Earl of PORTSMOUTH: We have already decided the matter, by an order, in the case of Militia officers. No Militia officer can become the secretary of an Association. In the case of a Yeoman, we have not decided that he could not become a secretary, but that he must be seconded. The practical effect would be the same. We hope that the Militia officers who are now in receipt of a retaining fee of £100 a year will join the Special Reserve, but they may decline to join the Special Reserve, and then rather a delicate question arises, because we would be imposing upon them the obligation of foreign service, which they did not originally undertake. Those cases will have to be considered on their merits.

*LORD HAVERSHAM: I presume that the officers who have earned Army pensions will retain them?

THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH: Yes. What I have said does not apply to men who are entitled to Army retired pay.

LORD SAYE AND SELE: It is evident that no officer in the Special Reserve can take one of these secretaryships, because if war breaks out he cannot be in two places at once.

THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH: We cannot allow the secretary of a County Association to mobilise. That is quite clear.

[House adjourned at twenty minutes past Seven o'clock, till To-morrow, a quarter past Four o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Tuesday, 31*st March*, 1908.

The House met at a quarter before Three of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Hull and Barnsley Railway Bill.—As amended, considered; to be read the third time.

Great Western Railway (Superannuation Scheme) Bill [Lords] (by Order).—Read a second time, and committed.

Metropolitan Police Provisional Order Bill.—"To confirm a Provisional Order made by one of His Majesty's Principal Secretaries of State under The Metropolitan Police Act, 1886, and The Metropolitan Police Courts Act, 1897," presented by Mr. Herbert Samuel; supported by Mr. Secretary Gladstone; read the first time; to be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 182.]

North Eastern Railway Bill: Humber Commercial Railway and Dock Bill.—Reported with Amendments; Reports to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

Leicester Corporation Bill.—Reported from the Police and Sanitary Committee, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

STANDING ORDERS.

Resolutions reported from the Select Committee—

1. "That, in the case of the Lower Thames (Grays) Dock Bill, Petition for dispensing with Standing Order 128 in the case of the Petition of 'Northfleet Paper Mills, Limited,' the Standing Order ought to be dispensed with."

2. "That, in the case of the Ards and Bangor Railways Bill, the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with:—That the parties be permitted to proceed with their Bill, on the condition that resolutions of the Belfast and County Down Railway Company, and of the County Council of the County of Down, and the Urban District Council of Newtownwards, approving of the Bill as introduced, and the deposit of copies of the said resolutions in accordance with the requirements of the Standing Orders, are proved before the Committee on the Bill, and that, failing such proof, Clause 19 and Clauses 83 to 90, both inclusive, be struck out of the Bill:—That the Committee on the Bill do report how far such Order has been complied with."

3. "That, in the case of the Stratford-upon-Avon, Towcester, and Midland Junction, Evesham, Redditch, and Stratford-upon-Avon Junction, and East and West Junction Railways (Amalgamation) [Lords], Petition for Bill, the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with:—That the parties be permitted to proceed with their Bill, on the condition that a clause is inserted in the Bill to the following effect, viz.: 'That no sale shall

take place of the amalgamated undertaking without the consent of the memorialists, Charles William Bartholomew, Richard Donald Bain, and William Howard Gray, which does not provide for the payment to the said memorialists of the sum of at least £5,000 in cash in respect of the debenture stock mentioned in Section 4 of the Act of 1901 or in respect of the stock of the new company incorporated by the Bill to be exchanged therefore under the provisions of the said Bill:'—That the Committee on the Bill do report how far such Order has been complied with."

4. "That, in the case of the Cambrian Railways [Lords], Petition for Bill, the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with:—That the parties be permitted to proceed with their Bill."

Resolutions agreed to.

ARDS AND BANGOR RAILWAYS BILL.

Report [this day] from the Select Committee on Standing Orders read.

Bill to be read a second time.—(*The Deputy-Chairman.*)

SLOUGH URBAN DISTRICT WATER BILL.

Reported [Preamble not proved]; Report to lie upon the Table.

PETITIONS.

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL.

Petition from Connah's Quay and Shotton, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSING BILL.

Petitions against: From Bath; Bowbroom (two); Concrete; Conisboro'; Darfield (two); Exeter; Jump (three); Low Valley; Malmesbury (three); Mexborough (nine); North-West Wilts; Oxford; Rotherham; Swinton (two); and, Wombwell (eight); to lie upon the Table.

LICENSING BILL.

Petitions in favour: From Amble; Batley (two); Bellshill; Bideford; Bolton (two); Chesterton (three); Chevington Drift; Cleckheaton; Connah's Quay and Shotton; Denmead; Eastney Exeter; Greenhead; Heanor and Langley; Heddon on the Wall; Hyde; Muddiford; New Hirst; North Finchley; Orkney; Oswestry; Oxford; Pengam and Fleur de Lis; Prudhoe on Tyne; Rothesay; Scarborough; Seghill; Sheffield; Southport; Staindrop; Toft Hill; Warrington (two); West Acomb; Westhoughton and Lostock; Whitehaven (two); Winchester; Willington Colliery; and, Wombwell; to lie upon the Table.

MORAY FIRTH (ILLEGAL TRAWLING).

Petition from Freswick, for prevention; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY BILL.

Petition from Felton, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

WOMEN'S ENFRANCHISEMENT BILL.

Petition from Kenilworth, in favour to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

NAVAL AND MARINE PAY AND PENSIONS ACT, 1865.

Copy presented, of Orders in Council, dated 19th March, 1908, approving Memorials of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty praying sanction to (1) certain improvements in the Pay and Position and new Regulations for the Retirement of Engineer Officers of His Majesty's Naval Service; (2) the payment of a Special Allowance of one shilling and sixpence a day to the Chief or Senior Gunner of the Torpedo School Ship at Sheerness [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

FOREIGN JURISDICTION ACT, 1890.

Copy presented, of Order in Council, dated 19th March, 1908, entitled "The Northern Nigeria Order in Council, 1908" [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

SUPREME COURT OF JUDICATURE ACT, 1875.

Copy presented, of Order in Council, dated 19th March, 1908, amending the Order in Council of 28th July, 1893, as amended by the Order in Council of 7th May, 1907, relating to the Circuits of the Judges [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

TERRITORIAL AND RESERVE FORCES ACT, 1907.

Copies presented, of Three Orders in Council, dated 19th March, 1908, viz.:—(1) For the transfer of the Yeomanry and Volunteers to the Territorial Force; (2) Relating to the Property of the Honourable Artillery Company; (3) Applying certain Enactments relating to the Militia, Yeomanry, or Volunteers to the Territorial Force [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

NAVY ESTIMATES, 1907-8 (PROGRAMME OF SHIPBUILDING, REPAIRS, MAINTENANCE, ETC.).

Copy presented, of Statement showing the propable effect on the Programme due to Re-appropriation of cash, provision, etc [by Command]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. (No. 108.)

CAPE OF GOOD HOPE OBSERVATORY.

Copy presented, of Reports of the Astronomer to the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty for the years 1906 and 1907 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

ARMY.

Copy presented, of General Annual Report on the British Army for the year ending 30th September 1907 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

TREATY SERIES (No. 7, 1908).

Copy presented, of Convention between the United Kingdom and France respecting Commercial relations between Erance and Barbados. Signed at London 9th January 1907. Ratifications exchanged at London, 18th March 1908 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

PANAMA CANAL (BRITISH WEST INDIAN LABOUR).

Copy presented, of Despatches from His Majesty's Minister at Panama, respecting the employment of British West Indian Labour in the Panama Canal zone [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

TESTAMENTARY BEQUESTS (FOREIGN COUNTRIES).

Address for "Return showing the limitations imposed by Law upon Testamentary Bequests in France, Germany, Italy, Russia, and the United States of America."—(*Mr Holt*).

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Customs Port Clerks Class.

MR. ALDEN (Middlesex, Tottenham): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury how many vacancies have occurred on the port clerks class in the Customs Department during the past eight years; how many of these vacancies have been filled by promotions from the new class of assistant clerks in the Statistical Office, and how many by men not in the service; what is the number of new class assistant clerks employed in the Statistical Office, and how many of these are eligible for promotion to port clerkships; how many vacancies at present exist on the port clerks class; and what is the total number of promotions to a superior grade made from the new class of assistant clerks in the Statistical Office during the past ten years.

(*Answered by Mr. Runciman.*) The information asked for in the Question is as follows:—

(1) Number of vacancies for port clerkships in the past eight years - - - - -	237
(2) Number of these vacancies filled by:—	
(a) Promotions of assistant clerks (new class) in the Statistical Office - -	2*
(b) Men not in the service -	220
(3) Number of assistant clerks (new class) in the Statistical Office -	150
(4) Number qualified so far as regards length of service for promotion to port clerkships -	64
(5) Number of existing vacancies for port clerkships - - -	15
(6) Total number of promotions of assistant clerks (new class) in the Statistical Office during the past ten years - - - -	2*

Shorthand Writer's Fees.

MR. TALBOT (Oxford University): To ask Mr. Attorney-General, whether, under Section 16 of The Criminal Appeal

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* In addition to this number there are two assistant clerks (new class) in the Statistical Office, who have been nominated for promotion to port clerkships subject to their passing the necessary qualifying examination.

Act, 1907, shorthand notes will be taken of the speeches of counsel, the evidence of witnesses, and the summing up of the Judge or chairman; and whether any arrangements are in contemplation for the employment of expert shorthand writers for the various Courts of Assize and quarter sessions.

(*Answered by Sir William Robson.*) The Judges of the Court of Criminal Appeal have made a rule dealing with the point raised in this Question as follows:—For the purpose of Section 16 of the Act proceedings at the trial shall mean the evidence and any objections taken in the course thereof, any statement made by the prisoner, the summing-up and sentence of the Judge of the Court of trial, but unless otherwise ordered by such Judge shall not include any part of the speeches of counsel or solicitor. This rule awaits the approval of the Lord Chancellor. I believe the Lord Chancellor will arrange for the appointment of expert shorthand writers.

Indian Fever and Opium.

MR. REES (Montgomery Boroughs): To ask the Secretary of State for India whether, in view of the fact that the mortality from fever in India is so greatly in excess of that occasioned by other diseases, and of the fact that opium is a recognised specific, and an absolute necessity to certain races and tribes of Indians, for the treatment of this disease, he will, in arrangements that are made for reducing the cultivation of opium, safeguard the supply of sufficient quantities for use for medicinal purposes.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Morley.*) I have no doubt that in any further regulations which the Government of India may make for the restriction of the opium habit in India, the special circumstances of particular tribes or races, necessitating a supply of the drug for medicinal purposes, will receive due consideration.

Indian Imperial Education Service.

MR. HART-DAVIES (Hackney, N.): To ask the Secretary of State for India whether, in filling up vacancies in the Imperial Education Service of India, he will take into consideration the claims of Indian graduates who have distinguished themselves at British or Indian Universities

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Morley.*) As I have stated before in reply to similar Questions, the conditions of the Indian Educational Service are fixed with a view to the position of officers serving away from their own country. They are therefore not appropriate in the case of natives of India, with a view to whose recruitment, on the other hand, the conditions of the Provincial Educational Service are adjusted.

War Office Land at Cloch Point.

MR. DUNDAS WHITE (Dumbartonshire): To ask the Secretary for Scotland if he can say what is now taken as the annual value for rating the land near Cloch Point, which was purchased by the War Office for £13,050 in 1905 and resold for £10,000 in 1907; or, if it is not entered in the valuation roll as a separate subject, by what amount the annual value as stated in the valuation roll of the subject in which it is now included has been increased in consequence of its inclusion.

(*Answered by Mr. Sinclair.*) The subject in question is entered in the valuation roll separately at the annual value of £20.

Gambling in Brewery Stock.

MR. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether his attention has been called to the depreciation on the London Stock Exchange in the prices of brewery and other allied stocks; whether he is aware that this has affected insurance and other large public companies with money invested, likewise causing losses to investors; and whether, seeing that the gambling agencies' transactions causing this depreciation have been based on the financial aspects of the Licensing Bill, the Government proposes to take any measures to restrain such gambling and bear operations in the London and other British stock exchanges, with a view of protecting *bona-fide* investors.

(*Answered by Mr. Asquith.*) The hon. Member is probably right in his conjecture that recent market fluctuations in the class of securities to which he refers have been to some extent due to speculative manipulation, but the matter does not appear to me to be one which could with advantage be dealt with by legislation.

Irish Land Purchase Finance.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.): To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether there is any good reason for restricting the benefit conferred by Section 10 of last year's Finance Act to loan capital merely; whether the hardship which that section was intended to remedy equally exists in the case of the consolidation of share capital; and whether he will consider the propriety of extending the benefit of the section to share capital also.

(*Answered by Mr. Asquith.*) The case referred to is presumably that in which loan capital is issued for the purpose of the conversion of existing share capital. I cannot agree that in such a case any hardship arises through a charge for loan capital duty being made at 2s. 6d. per cent. This duty is practically in substitution for the stamp duty which would be payable on a mortgage for the same purpose, which duty in the case in question would be at 2s. 6d., not 6d. per cent.

Irish Land Purchase Insurance Fund.

MR. T. M. HEALY: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can state the amount of the Insurance Fund accumulated under The Local Registration of Title (Ireland) Act, 1891, Section 92; how many claims on this fund have been received and allowed; and whether it is intended to continue to levy stamp duties, which in some cases are oppressively high, to add to the fund

(*Answered by Mr. Runciman.*) I am informed that (1) the amount of Insurance Fund up to 28th March, 1908, was as follows:—

	£	s.	d.
Consols - -	10,789	12	10
Cash - -	890	4	2
	£11,679	17	0

and that (2) one claim has been received and allowed. It is not considered desirable to discontinue the fees for insurance on which the safety of the system of conclusive registration depends, or to consider the question of reducing them until after further experience of the working of the system.

Irish Land Deeds—Stamp Duties.

MR. T. M. HEALY: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the stamp duties payable on the registration of a deed under The Local Registration of Title (Ireland) Act, 1891, are considerably higher than those charged in the old registering of deeds, with the result that for certain classes of conveyances, such as family deeds or settlements, the new procedure instead of being cheaper is considerably more expensive than the old; whether, in the case of large holdings, the registry fees in the local registry run to £3 or £4 as against the fixed fee of 10s. 6d. in the old registry of deeds; and whether he will represent to the proper authorities that a maximum fee should be fixed in the local registry somewhat approximating to the fee in the registry of deeds.

(*Answered by Mr. Runciman.*) Stamp duty is regulated by the Stamp Acts, and is, therefore, necessarily the same in the registry of titles and the registry of deeds. On the other hand the fees payable in the registry of deeds are regulated by 2 and 3 Will. 4, c. 87 (Schedule B), and depend on the length of the memorial, the number of grantors, and the number of denominations affected; whereas the fees payable in the registry of titles depend on the value of the land or charge affected by Section 8 of the Local Registration of Title (Ireland) Act, 1891. No proper comparison can accordingly be made between the two sets of fees, but it may be pointed out that the minimum fee in both offices is 8s., while there is no maximum fee in either office. It is the fact that the more valuable the land the higher the fees in the registry of titles, but it should be remembered that registration in that office gives a conclusive title, which is not the case in the registry of deeds. Also in the registration of charges in the registry of titles there is not the expense of a memorial, nor is any special fee allowed to the solicitor for the registration in that office. It follows that in most cases the actual cost to the public is less in the registry of title than in the registry of deeds. The question of the fees in the registry of titles has been for some time under consideration. When a new schedule is being prepared the question of a maximum fee will be carefully considered.

Extra Police in County Longford.

MR. J. P. FARRELL (Longford, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that, at the last monthly petty sessions court in Newtownforbes, county Longford, which is supposed to be the centre of agrarian discontent in county Longford, there were only three small cases for hearing, not one of which was for any agrarian offence; and will he, in these circumstances, now direct a reduction of the extra police force engaged there in protection duty.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The fact is as stated in the first part of the Question, but it is also the fact that there is a good deal of boycotting in the locality, and while this remains so the extra force cannot be reduced.

Lisnageeragh Townlands.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Estates Commissioners have yet succeeding in purchasing from the Land Judge the townlands of Lisnageeragh; if so, whether the purchase includes the turbary of lot seventeen offered for sale; and, if not, whether steps will be taken to acquire this bog for distribution amongst the purchasing tenants, who are entitled to its possession, having had all their lives the turbary rights there.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) Neither the Estates Commissioners nor the officials of the Land Judge's Court are able to identify the property in question from the information given. If the hon. Member will give the name and address of the owner of the lands, and the county in which they are situate, further inquiries will be made.

Longford Labourers Act Inquiry.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland to state whether any complaint has reached the Local Government Board as to the delay in furnishing the Report on the inquiry which took place under the Labourers Act in Longford on the 7th January last; and will he now call for the Report and the inspector's decision in the various cases heard on that occasion.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The Local Government Board have not received any complaint of delay. It is expected that the inspector's order, which is now in the printer's hands, will be ready in a few days, and as soon as it is signed copies will be forwarded to the council. The scheme was a large one, embracing 265 cottages and thirty-eight additional allotments.

The Colonies and the Race Question.

CAPTAIN FABER (Hampshire, Andover): To ask the Prime Minister whether, looking at the recent trouble which arose in South Africa through the finger-print orders, and as we have no Imperial opinion about the race question, he would communicate with the self-governing Colonies as to the desirability of a Commission which should elaborate an imperial scheme to anticipate such events by a common understanding.

(*Answered by Mr. Churchill.*) The Secretary of State for the Colonies has recently stated in the House of Lords his reasons for deprecating the line of action suggested, and I would therefore refer the hon. Member to that statement which was made on the 17th February.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Fife Coast and the Coastguard Service.

MAJOR ANSTRUTHER-GRAY (St. Andrews Burghs): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether any changes are contemplated on the Fife coast with regard to stations or *personnel* of the Coastguard service.

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON, Dundee): No changes are contemplated at present at any stations on the Fife coast.

Naval Promotions.

MR. BARNES (Glasgow, Blackfriars): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty what numbers have been promoted respectively to the rank of admiral, captain, commander, lieutenant, sub-lieutenant, gunner, boatswain, carpenter, artificer, and engineer since 1st April, 1906; what proportion do such promotions bear to the numbers of officers in each of the above cases; and what is the increased pay consequent on such improvement in rank.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: The figures are as follows:—

Rank.	Number of Officers promoted.	Total number of Officers at the present date.	Percentage of promotions to total.
Rear-Admiral - -	34	96 (*a*)	35
Captain - - -	65	250	26
Commander - -	101	368	27
Lieutenant - - -	391	1,677 (*b*)	23
Sub-Lieutenant - -	396	460	86
Gunners - - Boatswains - -	92	1,181 (*c*)	8
Signal Boatswains -	6	67 (*d*)	9
Carpenters - - -	7	271 (*e*)	3
Artificer Engineers -	21	425 (*f*)	5

(*a*) Total number of flag officers.
(*b*) Including those promoted from chief warrant rank.
(*c*) Including chief gunners and chief boatswains.
(*d*) Including chief signal boatswains.
(*e*) Including chief carpenters.
(*f*) Including chief artificer engineers.

As regards the last part of the Question, full details of the pay of all ranks and ratings in the service will be found in the Quarterly Navy List, pages 773 to 822.

Recruits' Uniforms.

MR. BRIDGEMAN (Shropshire, Oswestry): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if he is aware that men recruited at the Oxford depot were not supplied with uniforms for several weeks after joining the colours, and therefore had to be confined to barracks; and if this is due to the reduction lately enforced in the stock of Army clothing kept at the depot.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. HALDANE, Haddington): This regiment is now being supplied with the new green cap. There appears to have been an abnormal demand for the small sizes, and some delay in the issue was caused thereby. It was in no way due to any reduction of stock of Army clothing. The recruits were allowed to go out of barracks in khaki uniform, so no recruit has at any time been confined to barracks for want of clothing or caps.

Cavalry Barracks in Scotland.

MR. MITCHELL-THOMSON (Lanarkshire, N.W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War what progress has been made in the selection of sites for cavalry barracks in Scotland?

MR. HALDANE: The matter is still under consideration, and no information can be furnished for some little time.

MR. PIRIE (Aberdeen, N.): Can the right hon. Gentleman explain the reason of the delay in carrying out his promise?

MR. HALDANE was understood to say the reason was that the Government had to make the barracks fit their policy and not the policy fit the barracks.

*MR. GULLAND (Dumfries Burghs) asked whether the right hon. Gentleman had yet decided how to utilise the ground belonging to the War Office at Dumfries.

MR. YOUNGER (Ayr Burghs) wished to know if arrangements had been made to train the Yeomanry along with the Regular Forces.

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order. That does not arise from the Question on the Paper.

MAJOR ANSTRUTHER-GRAY asked the right hon. Gentleman whether he could give any indication when he could make a statement on the subject.

MR. HALDANE: No, sir.

MR. WATT (Glasgow, College): Will there be a Royal visit to Scotland shortly and will not cavalry be required in connection with that?

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order.

Transfer of Officers.

MR. WALTER LONG (Dublin, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether his attention has been called to the fact that the compulsory transfer of officers from one regiment to another, caused by the recent disbandment of certain units, imposes a considerable amount of hardship and expense on the officers concerned, and that such transfers generally necessitate a change of stations which are sometimes at considerable distances from each other; and whether he will consider the advisability of relieving officers from personal expense in connection with such transfers.

MR. HALDANE: As I have already explained to the House, officers so transferred will be compensated for any necessary expense entailed in change of uniform. They will also receive the regulation allowances for travelling expenditure.

Maharajah of Baroda's Administration.

MR. O'GRADY (Leeds, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether he is aware that in the Native State of Baroda the Maharajah has, with the help of his Ministers, separated the judicial from the executive functions, restored local self-government in the form of the the ancient village Panchayat, instituted primary education, compulsory and universal, throughout the State, and has further instituted the reform of popularly-elected members in the Legislative Council; and, if so, whether the Council of India will consider such reforms, with a view of suggesting to the Viceroy in Council their application to other Native States, and to India as a whole?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Mr. MORLEY, Montrose Burghs): I am aware of the measures recently introduced in Baroda; their results will be watched with interest, and will be considered in their bearing on Indian administration generally. But I need hardly say that I cannot undertake forthwith to suggest the introduction of similar measures in the whole of British India, and I certainly cannot interfere with the discretion of the rulers of other States.

Indian Penal Code—Press Prosecutions.

MR. O'GRADY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether in view of the prosecution and sentence of printers and editors of papers in India generally to long terms of rigorous imprisonment and heavy amounts in fines under the Indian Penal Code for carrying on the propaganda of nationalism, and as it is impossible to carry on such propaganda without transgressing the terms of the code, he will take steps to amend the code so that constitutional reform agitation shall be exempt from its operation.

MR. MORLEY: If my hon. friend will refer to Section 124A of the Indian Penal Code, under which the prosecutions to which he refers have taken place, he will find that it includes this provision: "Comments expressing disapprobation of the measures of the Government with a view to obtain their alteration by lawful means, without exciting or attempting to excite hatred, contempt, or disaffection do not constitute an offence under this section." I am not prepared to extend the exemption to forms of agitation such as cannot be brought within this description.

Mr. O'GRADY asked whether the right hon. Gentleman would consider the advisability of exempting from the operation of the Penal Code such acts as came within the propaganda of nationalism.

Mr. MORLEY: I cannot exempt anybody from the operation of the Penal Code.

Mr. O'GRADY asked whether it was not possible to frame some new law to deal especially with cases of this character.

Mr. MORLEY: I am asked to introduce a new law allowing anybody to agitate for a change of Government and excite or attempt to excite "hatred, contempt and disaffection." I do not think I could be responsible for a change of law of that kind.

Mr. O'GRADY asked whether they were to understand that the Government of India wished to put an end to the propaganda of nationalism in India, because it was impossible to carry it on under the terms of the Penal Code.

Mr. MORLEY: They can agitate as much as they please, but they must not break the law by deliberately exciting hatred, contempt, and disaffection.

Sir H. COTTON (Nottingham, E.) asked whether his right hon. friend was not aware that a learned Chief Justice in India, when he was only Justice in the Bombay Court, defined the word "disaffection" in the section as meaning want of affection.

Mr. MORLEY: My hon. friend must be so good as to give me notice of that.

Colonial Office Legal Appointments.

*Mr. WATT: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he is aware that in the Regulations as to Legal Appointments of the Colonial Office (No. 117, Third Edition, page 4) candidates are instructed that the maximum age for application is forty years, yet that candidates have been informed that they are too old, although only thirty-five years of age at the date of the reply; and, if so, will he in future see that the regulations issued correspond with the methods of the office.

The UNDER-SECRETARY of STATE for the COLONIES (Mr. Churchill, Manchester, N.W.): The limit of age for candidates for legal appointments is forty years, and for administrative appointments thirty-five years; and I have no reason to suppose that the practice followed in dealing with applications is out of harmony with the regulations issued. I understand that the case to which my hon. friend refers is that of a candidate who was not considered to be sufficiently qualified for a legal appointment. He was, however, carefully considered for an administrative appointment until he had passed the age limit for those posts.

*Mr. WATT: Is it an essential qualification under the present *regime* that a candidate should not be a member of the Liberal Party?

Mr. CHURCHILL: I think it very undesirable to introduce principles of that kind.

Trinidad—Fines on Railway Employees.

Mr. SUMMERBELL (Sunderland): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies if he can state the total amount received by the Government of Trinidad during the years 1906–7 in the shape of fines imposed on railway employees for various offences, as also the amount for each year distributed to deserving men out of such moneys in the shape of bonuses and rewards.

Mr. CHURCHILL: The Secretary of State has not received the figures for the year 1906–7, but for the year 1905–6 the fines received amounted to £26 5s. 6d., and the gratuities paid amounted to £32 7s. 11d.

Trinidad—Legislative Council's Finance Committee.

Mr. SUMMERBELL: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the

Colonies if he is aware that the meetings of the finance committee of the Legislative Council of Trinidad are held with closed doors, and that the taxpayers have no knowledge as to its deliberations; and, if so, can he state whether he is prepared to take action with a view to the meetings of such committee being of a more open character in the future.

Mr. CHURCHILL: The Secretary of State understands that, under the Standing Order of the Legislative Council of Trinidad, the Government of that Colony consults the Standing Committee on Finance before submitting to the Council votes entailing expenditure from public funds. My noble friend has no information as to the conditions under which the Standing Committee deliberate on the proposals made to them by the Government, but he considers that at this preliminary stage of considering expenditure it is only proper that publicity should be avoided. Full opportunity for discussion in public arises when the report of the Committee is presented to the Council.

East Indians in Trinidad.

Mr. SUMMERBELL: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies if he has received from the Trinidad Working Men's Association a communication to the effect that, owing to the number of East Indian and West Indian labourers unemployed in the town and country districts of the colony, and to the number of East Indians unemployed inhabiting public lodging-houses licensed by ordinance, and owing also to the predominance of crime, particularly among East Indians, the association protests against the importation of another 2,400 East Indian immigrants, as set out in the application by the Protector of Immigrants laid on the table of the Legislative Council of the Colony at its meeting of 17th February, 1908, and feels the time has arrived that any further importation of such coolies should be at once stopped; and, if so, can he state whether it is the intention of the Government to accede to such latter request.

Mr. CHURCHILL: No, Sir. No such communication has been received.

White Labour in the Transvaal Mines.

Mr. BRIDGEMAN (Shropshire, Oswestry): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies how many of the Chinese miners who have been repatriated have been replaced in the Transvaal mines by white miners of British origin.

Mr. CHURCHILL: None, Sir, as far as I am aware. The Chinese were by law restricted to unskilled labour, and their places are being taken by Kaffirs.

Sir GILBERT PARKER (Gravesend): Is the right hon. Gentleman not aware that a member of the Government sitting beside the right hon. Gentleman announced that if the Chinese were withdrawn 50,000 white men would find work?

Mr. CHURCHILL: I am not aware that that statement was made, but if it were made it could scarcely be more absurd than the statement of Lord Milner that for every 10,000 Chinese there would be 1,000 white men employed.

Dinizulu.

Mr. ELLIS (Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether Dinizulu is still confined in prison; whether he has yet been informed of the specific charges laid against him, with full particulars of names, dates, and places respecting them; whether he has free and unrestricted access to such legal advisers as he may desire and can receive visits from friends; and whether a date has yet been fixed for his trial.

Mr. CHURCHILL: Dinizulu is still confined to prison. Perhaps the House will allow me to read the recent telegraphic correspondence on this subject generally, which will give the fullest information in the possession of the Secretary of State. On 19th March the Secretary of State telegraphed to the Governor of Natal as follows:—"I am sorry to have to recur to Jellicoe's allegations, but I am pressed for reply in detail to several points and I desire to be in a position to do full justice to your Ministers if and when they are assailed on any particular ground. (*a*) Have Dinizulu's advisers full access to all statements and depositions which are being used by or before the magistrate, with liberty to cross-examine witnesses upon them? (*b*) Are they permitted to make inspection of papers, etc., taken from Dinizulu's custody? (*c*) Are they or their agents permitted to go into Zululand to collect evidence for the defence, and if not, when will they be allowed to do so? (*d*) Can you also give me any further information as to the foundation for allegations of undue delay by the examining magistrate; of coercion under martial law to sign depositions, and of brow-beating of witnesses in Court? All these points are the subject of inquiry. I am also anxious for some information (*e*) as to the detention of Mankulumana and Mgwago in addition to Dinizulu. In England as you know a man cannot be detained in prison without formulating some definite sworn information against him, or a writ of habeas corpus would promptly issue. It is a matter of comment that there would seem to be no similar means of securing the liberty of the subject in Natal, and that men may be detained indefinitely in gaol without redress. Any information you can send me to rebut this position will be most welcome." On the 27th the following answer was received —" Ministers have asked me to reply to your telegram of 19th March in terms of the following Minute of acting Attorney-General. The preparatory examination in Dinuzulu's case is proceeding in ordinary course before the tribunals created by law for the purpose. Government have no control over such tribunals and are neither responsible nor can they be required to answer for the proceedings there. If any impropriety or injustice takes place a remedy can be sought in the higher Courts, but no application has hitherto been made for such relief. But in so far as Government may wish to be in a position to answer the specific questions asked by the Secretary of State for the Colonies I take them in turn. (*a*) Yes; Dinuzulu's advisers have full access to all statements and depositions used by or before the magistrate with liberty to cross-examine witnesses on them. Counsel for Dinuzulu is always present, sometimes two counsel. (*b*) The papers taken from Dinuzulu's custody, of which there is considerable quantity, are being translated for my information. Up to the present I have not considered them nor have I allowed them to be inspected by Dinuzulu's solicitors. (*c*) Up to the present permission has not as far as I am aware been given to Dinuzulu's solicitors to go to Zululand to collect evidence. Proper opportunities will be given when the fitting time arrives. I cannot advise that permission be given yet. (*d*) There has been no undue delay: evidence has been brought forward as quickly as possible. Any allegations of coercion under martial law to sign depositions would be to the best of my information entirely baseless. Accusation of brow-beating in Court would be equally untrue. (*e*) Preparatory examinations are proceeding against Mankulamana and Mgwago on charges of treason. Certain general questions are asked regarding the necessity of definite sworn information. I need merely say that none of the prisoners have been arrested except upon sworn information and warrants granted by judicial authority. The course followed has been that prescribed by the long established law of the Colony and of Cape Colony before Natal was annexed. Some of our forms differ from those of English law, but our system is equally founded on principles of justice and fairness."

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S): Has not the Cape Premier complained of this "damnable interference?"

*Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order. That does not arise on this Question.

Mr. LEHMANN (Leicestershire, Market Harborough): Are we to understand that by protracting this preliminary examination for an indefinite period no definite charge can be brought?

Mr. CHURCHILL: My hon. friend puts the case as severely as it can be put, but I am not in a position at present to rebut his interpretation of it.

Mr. ELLIS: Has the Secretary of State asked the Ministers of Natal when the trial is likely to take place?

Mr. CHURCHILL: Yes; we have asked when the distinct charges will be formulated and a definite trial begun. We are informed that the preparatory examination is now taking place, and they cannot say when that examination will be finished.

Opium Trade in the Straits Settlements.

Mr. LAIDLAW (Renfrewshire, E.): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies if he can say when the full Report of the Committee on the Opium Trade in the Straits Settlements and Federated Malay States will be laid upon the Table.

MR. CHURCHILL: The Secretary of State has not yet received the Report of the Commission, but the Governor of the Straits Settlements will be asked to state when it may be expected.

The Treaty of Paris.

MR. ASHLEY (Lancashire, Blackpool): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether any one of the Powers who signed the Treaty of Paris in 1856 has proposed that it should be modified in any way.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir EDWARD GREY, Northumberland, Berwick): There were seven Powers who were parties to the Treaty of Paris, and I can answer Questions only respecting the action of His Majesty's Government. We are not engaged in any negotiation respecting any modification of the Treaty, nor am I aware that any such is proceeding.

British Trawlers and the Norwegian Flag.

MR. WATT: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he is aware that the Government of Norway three years ago passed a measure prohibiting trawlers owned in Britain registering under the flag of Norway, but that that Act was not retrospective, and that it is therefore only vessels registered in Norway before that date which at present work in the Moray Firth; and whether, in view of the fact that the Norwegian Government is in no way sympathetic to the action of these trawlers, he will not oppose the carrying out of the unanimous decision of the Judges of the Court of Session.

SIR EDWARD GREY: I am generally aware of the provisions of the Norwegian law on the subject, and can communicate them to the hon. Member if he desires it. In answer to the last part of the Question, I must refer the hon. Member to the Answer given by the Secretary for Scotland on the 26th, which stated the policy not of a Department but of the Government.

Wimbledon and Clapham Junction Cab Drivers.

MR. WILES (Islington, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether, having regard to the petitions sent to him signed by a number of the inhabitants, as well as the local cab drivers of the district, he will consider the advisability of opening to all cab drivers Wimbledon station and the London, Brighton, and South Coast Railway side of Clapham Junction.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. GLADSTONE, Leeds, W.): As regards Wimbledon station, the petition to which the hon. Member refers has been carefully considered, but according to the information I have so far received the retention of the privilege system there seems to be desirable in order to secure a sufficient supply of cabs for the proper accommodation of the public. As regards the London, Brighton, and South Coast Railway station at Clapham Junction, I have just heard from the Company that their contract for privilege cabs expired on Wednesday last, and that from that date the station is open to all cab drivers on the conditions obtaining at London terminal stations. I am issuing a formal order to that effect.

The Licensing Bill.

MR. CLYNES (Manchester, N.E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he can give the number of licensed houses closed in Manchester under the operation of the Licensing Act of 1904; whether opposition was offered to such closing; what was the sum paid in compensation; what proportion of the compensation was paid to the tenants; and whether there is any record of any compensation paid to the workmen or servants who lost situations through the closing of houses.

MR. GLADSTONE: All the available information in answer to this Question is contained in the annual volumes of Licensing Statistics. It appears from them that 139 licensed premises have been closed in Manchester under the Licensing Act, 1904, and that a total sum of £107,128 was paid in compensation, of which about 7 per cent. went to the licence-holders.

MR. CLYNES: The right hon. Gentleman has not answered the last part of my Question. Have the Government contemplated making provision in the Licensing Bill which will ensure compensation being paid to displaced workmen?

MR. GLADSTONE: I must refer my hon. friend to the Bill as it stands.

MR. BOTTOMLEY (Hackney, S.): Has the right hon. Gentleman formed any estimate of the number of people who will be thrown out of employment if the Licensing Bill becomes law?

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order. Notice should be given of that Question, which is rather far from the Question on the Paper.

Death from Anthrax at Bradford.

MR. JOWETT (Bradford, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the death, on the 8th instant, of a man named Michael Quigley, of Bradford, from anthrax, contracted whilst handling dirty cheap foreign wool for Messrs. Campbell and Harrison, woolcombers, of Shipley; if he is aware that the wool in its dusty state was thrown down to Quigley from the room above through a trap door; and what steps he is taking to protect working people whose anxiety to earn a livelihood forces them to work under such dangerous conditions.

MR. GLADSTONE: I have received a report on this case, from which it appears that the wool, after opening, was sent down a shoot for blending purposes in the room below, but that the whole of it had been opened over a fan in order to remove dust and dirt, and that in order still further to reduce the risk from dust, the shoot is provided with swing doors half way down which break the fall of the material. I am informed that the regulations are fully observed at the factory and that the firm are voluntarily observing additional precautions, including the provision of respirators, the opening of all material over the opening boards and the washing of all material in a disinfectant liquid. I am causing further inquiry to be made as to whether any additional measures can be taken to reduce the danger at the blending heap.

MR. KILBRIDE (Kildare, S.): Whence was this wool imported?

MR. GLADSTONE: I will find out.

Hamstead Colliery Disaster.

DR. HAZEL (West Bromwich): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether he will direct a formal investigation to be made of the fire which occurred at the Hamstead Colliery, South Staffordshire, on the 4th March, by which over twenty lives were lost, and of the causes and circumstances of the accident, including the condition of the mine at the time of the accident.

MR. GLADSTONE: Yes, Sir. I have already made arrangements for this purpose. The investigation will be held by Professor Redmayne, of Birmingham University.

DR. HAZEL: Can the right hon. Gentleman say when the investigation will take place?

MR. GLADSTONE: The preliminary steps will be taken this week.

Motor 'Bus Routes.

SIR HENRY CRAIK (Glasgow and Aberdeen Universities): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether there is an authority which can restrict the use by motor omnibuses of narrow thoroughfares, where a maximum of danger and of vibration to neighbouring buildings is caused, instead of wider alternative routes, and whether there is any periodically recurring inspection of these vehicles, so as to detect the increased vibration caused by the inferior and rapidly deteriorating machinery used by certain companies.

MR. GLADSTONE: The Answer to the first part of the Question is in the negative. As regards the second, every motor omnibus is inspected at least once a year when it comes up for its annual licence. Besides undergoing this annual inspection, motor omnibuses are often reported and ordered off the streets for noise and vibration. Each such order entails fresh inspection before the vehicle is permitted to use the streets again. It must be remembered, however, that noise and vibration are often largely due to uneven road surfaces.

SIR HENRY CRAIK: But have the public no security whatsoever against the cupidity of rival companies in choosing routes entirely without regard to public convenience?

MR. GLADSTONE: No, Sir. The law does not authorise the police to regulate the traffic in that way.

Import Duties Abroad.

MR. J. F. MASON (Windsor): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he can give information as to the amount per head of population derived from import duties in the three following countries, viz., the United Kingdom, the United States of America, and Germany.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE, Carnarvon Boroughs): The net revenue from import duties (after deducting drawbacks and refunds) was equivalent in the last completed financial year to the following sums per annum per head of population: United Kingdom 15s. 3d., United States of America 15s. 9d., Germany 9s. 5d.

Railway Superannuation Funds.

MR. HUDSON (Newcastle on-Tyne): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if he can say whether an inquiry into the question of railway superannuation and pension funds will be held; and, if so, when the Committee will be appointed and what form the inquiry will take?

*MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: I have arranged to appoint a Departmental Committee to inquire into the constitution, rules, administration, and financial position of the Superannuation and similar Funds of Railway Companies. The composition of the Committee will be announced shortly.

MR. HUDSON: Will the terms of reference cover other traction companies, such as tramways?

*MR LLOYD-GEORGE: No. I cannot say that I contemplate including tramways.

Foreign Powers and the British Patent Laws.

MR. HADDOCK (Lancashire, North Lonsdale): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether any representations have been made by Germany or any other Foreign country regarding the new British Patent Law?

THE SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. KEARLEY, Devonport): Representations have been made from Germany and the United States with regard to certain provisions of the new Patents and Designs Act which affect patents worked wholly or exclusively abroad.

Grants to Distress Committees.

MR. CLYNES: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he has considered the opinion in the Report of the Association of Municipal Corporations that, during the continuance of the present Unemployed Act, Exchequer grants should be made to distress committees for the payment of wages to those employed under the Act on works of public utility; whether he was asked to receive a deputation to hear the views of the association; and whether he can now make any statement on his promise to bring under the notice of the Poor Law Commission the suggestion to report at once their recommendations respecting unemployment, with a view to immediate action being taken by the House to meet the demand for work.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. JOHN BURNS, Battersea): As regards the first two points in the Question the reply is in the affirmative. I have communicated to the Royal Commission the suggestion referred to in the last part of it, but I am not able to make any statement as to the course proposed to be taken by them with regard to it.

MR. CLYNES: Did the right hon. Gentleman decline to receive a deputation from the Association of Municipal Corporations?

MR. JOHN BURNS: Yes, I declined to receive that particular deputation, because I had received a number of deputations upon points which they were anxious to discuss.

Mr. CLYNES: Has the right hon. Gentleman formed any conclusions on the opinions expressed in the report of the Association?

Mr. JOHN BURNS: Several.

Mr. CLYNES: Is the right hon. Gentleman prepared to announce them?

Mr. JOHN BURNS: At this moment, no, sir.

Corporal Punishment in Battle Workhouse.

Mr. CLYNES: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether with reference to the case of a boy in Battle workhouse who was given six strokes with a cane on the bare back by the master, he has yet received a report from the Battle guardians, together with statements in writing from the master and the medical officer of Battle workhouse; and whether, seeing that the majority of the Battle guardians disapproved of the stripping of the boy in this instance, and that the use of corporal punishment is disallowed in the case of girls in workhouses, he will prohibit in future the infliction of corporal punishment on the nude bodies of boys.

Mr. JOHN BURNS: I have received the report and statements referred to. I do not think that a cane should be used on the naked body of a boy, and I find that the guardians have instructed the master not to administer any corporal punishment on the naked flesh of any boy unless previously sanctioned by them. I do not consider it necessary to take any further action in the matter.

Shotton Council School.

Mr. BRIDGEMAN (Shropshire, Oswestry): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education if he has sanctioned the building of a new council school in the parish of Shotton, Flintshire, adjacent to a Church school in which the accommodation is 282, and the average attendance below 200, and where no lessons on the Catechism or Prayer Book are given except to children whose parents have expressed their desire for it; and if he can say why no inquiry was held when a petition signed by 115 ratepayers was sent asking for an inquiry?

The PRESIDENT of the BOARD of EDUCATION (Mr. McKenna, Monmouth, N.): Yes, Sir; a new council school in this parish has been sanctioned. The local education authority informs me that there are 740 children of school age in the district, and that the only school available is the St. Ethelwold's Church School accommodating 282 children. Many children for whom accommodation should be provided in Shotton are understood to walk a considerable distance to other schools. In these circumstances it did not appear to the Board necessary to hold a public inquiry in order to enable them to arrive at a decision.

Mr. BRIDGEMAN: What steps does the right hon. Gentleman propose to take to ascertain the views of those who object?

Mr. McKENNA: It is not necessary to take any steps. The local authorities are satisfied that accommodation must be found for these 500 children.

Mr. BRIDGEMAN: Then it is a case of hearing only one side?

Mr. McKENNA: No, sir; but the local authority must conform to the wishes of the Standing Committee.

Southampton Catholic Secondary School.

Mr. BOLAND (Kerry, S.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education whether, with reference to the letter of the 19th March, addressed by the Board of Education to the manager of the Catholic Secondary School at Southampton, he is aware that for twenty-five years this school met local requirements, and that no application for assistance from the local education authority was made; whether he is aware that the Catholic day scholars are more than sixty, and not a little more than forty as stated in the Board's letter; and whether, in view of the fact that education is willingly provided in this school for children drawn from other sections of the population, and that the local education authority is in favour of the waiver of Articles 5, 23, and 24 of the Regulations, he will state when this application will be granted?

MR. McKENNA: According to information given by the school authorities to His Majesty's Inspector on a visit to this school between the 21st and 24th of November last, there were then 60 Catholic scholars in all in attendance out of a total number of 124 scholars, but of the 60 Catholic scholars, 17 were boarders, leaving 43 Catholic day scholars, or little more than 40 as stated in the Board's letter. The argument drawn from the small number of Catholic scholars in the school has already been the subject of debate in this House, and I must beg the hon. Member to excuse me from continuing now a discussion which cannot be properly concluded in the form of an Answer to a Question.

MR. BOLAND: Then am I to understand that because this Catholic school generously opened its doors to Protestant children it is to be deprived of the higher grant?

MR. McKENNA: No, sir; as I have explained, that is not the reason why.

MR. BOLAND: I shall put a further Question on this.

Headmasters and the New Education Act.

SIR GEORGE SCOTT ROBERTSON (Bradford, Central): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education how will a certain admittedly able and efficient headmaster under forty, and now drawing a salary of £240 a year, be provided for if his large non-provided school is abandoned altogether under the new Act, its scholars being found places in the neighbouring schools, as would probably be the case; and will the headmaster be compensated adequately for his loss, unless and until a similar situation is found for him, or must he go forth to seek employment perhaps in a much humbler position in order to earn a living.

MR. McKENNA: My hon. friend's Question raises issues which can be more conveniently dealt with in debate than by means of Question and Answer.

Necessitous Children.

MR. HADDOCK: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he will state the number of children who were reported by the Children's Care Committees as necessitous, and the number fed, in the week ending 6th March, in London County Council schools; and whether he can also state the number of dinnerless school children in the schools of Berlin.

MR. McKENNA: I understood from a newspaper report that the number of schools reported by the Sub-Committee on underfed children has having necessitous children during the week ended 6th March, was 461, the number of children being 46,123. The number of children fed in the 461 schools was 45,142. I have no information as to the last paragraph.

Dog Poisoning in Sutherlandshire.

MR. MORTON (Sutherland): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether any information has yet been received as to the person or persons who poisoned the crofters' dogs last year in the neighbourhood of Badininish, Skibbo, Sutherlandshire.

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Mr. SINCLAIR, Forfarshire): I have made inquiries from the criminal authorities and no further information has been obtained.

Scottish Local Government.

MAJOR ANSTRUTHER-GRAY: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether he can give any information as to the introduction of a Bill on the lines of the Local Government (Scotland) (No. 2) Bill, which was withdrawn in July 1906, on the understanding that he would endeavour to do so as soon as time was available.

MR. SINCLAIR: I still hope that time may be available this session for the consideration of such a measure, but am not yet able to make a definite promise.

MAJOR ANSTRUTHER-GRAY: Can the right hon. Gentleman indicate a date when we may expect a further statement?

MR. SINCLAIR: I am sorry I cannot.

MAJOR ANSTRUTHER-GRAY: Not before Easter?

MR. SINCLAIR: No, sir.

Trawling outside Territorial Waters.

MR. ASHLEY: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland if he is aware that the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs has recently formally protested against the Uruguayan Government's claims to jurisdiction over River Plate waters outside the three-mile limit; and whether, in view of this fact, he has secured the support of the Foreign Office to the proposals for regulating the operations of trawlers outside territorial waters which he is formulating for submission to other Powers.

MR. SINCLAIR: I am informed by my right hon. friend that the reply to the first part of the question is in the affirmative. Any proposals to be laid before the Powers will be made on the responsibility of the Government as a whole.

Boy Clerks.

MR. CLAUDE HAY (Shoreditch, Hoxton): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury if he will render every assistance to boy clerks in their efforts to secure suitable outside employment; and for this means will he cause an employment register containing full particulars of thoroughly trustworthy boy clerks, who are approaching the age of 20, together with the names of the firms who are willing to employ such boys, to be kept at each office in the United Kingdom where boy clerks are employed, in view of the fact that a similar plan has been instrumental in obtaining employment for large numbers of telegraph messengers in the Post Office, who are situated in a somewhat similar position to boy clerks in the Civil Service.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. RUNCIMAN, Dewsbury): I fear that it would be impracticable to give effect to the hon. Member's proposal in its present form. But the Civil Service Commissioners, who keep the register of boy clerks, will be ready to answer inquiries from employers as to the qualifications of those about to be discharged.

MR. CLAUDE HAY: Can the right hon. Gentleman say why?

MR. RUNCIMAN: It is the view of the Civil Service Commissioners, and I am not prepared to contest it.

Selling by Auction without Licence.

MR. HUNT (Shropshire, Ludlow): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury why Mr. A. H. Wainwright, clothier, Knighton, was allowed to sell by auction the surplus provisions which were over from an entertainment at the Assembly Rooms at Knighton on 10th January last, seeing that he had not an auctioneer's licence; and why the Excise officer took no notice of the matter.

MR. RUNCIMAN: The matter was not brought to the knowledge of the Excise officer until a month after its occurrence, and in view of the trivial and isolated character of the offence it was decided to overlook it.

MR. HUNT: Does not an auctioneer have to take out a £10 licence?

MR. RUNCIMAN: That is so.

Potato Disease.

MR. FFRENCH (Wexford, S.): I beg to ask the Vice-President of the Department of Agriculture (Ireland) if the latest potato disease in Great Britain, known as the black scab, has made its appearance in many places; if it has made its appearance at all in Ireland; and if the Irish Board of Agriculture are taking any steps to prevent its importation.

THE VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE FOR IRELAND (Mr. T. W. RUSSELL, Tyrone, S.): The Department have for a considerable time been on the look out for this disease, but fortunately so far no evidence of its presence in Ireland has been discovered. Fearing its importation from Great Britain with seed supplied under the Seed Loan Scheme this year, the Department sent to the Local Government Board for Ireland a printed description and illustrations of the disease with a request that the same should be furnished to the Seed Inspectors and that those officers should be asked to examine carefully imported seed for the disease. This the Local Government Board have done, and no cases of the disease have so far been reported.

Non-Residential Grazing Tenants.

SIR WALTER NUGENT (Westmeath, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will advise the Estates Commissioners in future not to advance money to non-residential grazing tenants for the purchase of tracts of land held under grazing leases; and if he will further recommend them to make careful inquiry before making any advances of purchase money when there is any reason to believe that fraudulent leases have been created in order to permit transfers of land to be made, contrary to the spirit of the Land Acts and to the rules laid down by the Commissioners themselves.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. CHERRY, Liverpool, Exchange; for Mr. BIRRELL): My right hon. friend has asked me reply to Questions to day. The Estates Commissioners inform me that they exercise the discretion given to them by the Act of 1903 as to the amount, if any, of the advances to be made to non-residential grazing tenants holding under lease. It is the Commissioners' practice to make careful inquiries in all cases in which they have any reason to suspect that fraudulent means are being adopted in order to obtain advances.

Royal Irish Constabulary.

MR. MULDOON (Wicklow, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, whether the Royal Irish Constabulary authorities have refused to permit the members of that force in Ireland to report as to any cases of infringement coming under their notice of the provisions of closing orders under The Shop Hours Act, 1904, which have been confirmed by the Lord-Lieutenant and left upon the Table of this House; and, if so, whether the time has arrived when the members of that force, who have absolutely nothing to do in many Irish towns, might be utilised with advantage to enforce public health, sanitary, and general statutes, and local by-laws, if not as complainants at least as witnesses on behalf of the local authorities, and thus render some service for the cost the upkeep of the force imposes on the nation.

MR. CHERRY: The facts are not correctly stated in the Question. The police are permitted to assist the local authorities to the extent of reporting any breaches of closing orders which may come under their notice, and instructions to that effect are issued to them when application for their assistance is made by local authorities. The police perform a number of duties under the public health and sanitary laws, including the reporting of offences; and in certain cases they take proceedings for breaches of county council by-laws. They cannot, however, undertake to perform all the duties which devolve upon the officers of local authorities in these cases.

Cooldoney Evicted Tenants.

MR. J. P. FARRELL (Longford, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Estates Commissioners are taking, or intend to take, any steps to reinstate Philip Reilly, son of the evicted tenant, in the farm from which his father was evicted at Cooldoney, county Longford; and, if not, will they now take action in the matter.

MR. CHERRY: The reply is in the negative. The applicant is employed as a clerk in Dublin, and the Estates Commissioners do not consider him to be a suitable person to work a holding.

Longford Grazing Farms.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that a portion of the grazing farms of Tully, Asnagh, and Ardagullion, at present held by Mr. James W. Bond, D.L., was at one time in occupation of a number of Catholic tenants who were evicted from it by Mr. Bond's grandfather; and, if so, will the Commissioners take any steps to have these tenants reinstated.

MR. CHERRY: The Estates Commissioners have no knowledge of the fact alleged in the Question. The only application for reinstatement in any of the townlands mentioned which the Estates Commissioners have received is one sent by the representative of a tenant evicted forty-three years ago. The applicant therefore is not eligible for reinstatement under section 2 of the Act of 1903.

Mr. Davoren's Killasona Estate.

Mr. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that in May, 1906, Mr. Richard Davoren agreed to sell his estate at Killasona, County Longford, to his tenants and to divide his residential holding at Killasona amongst his said tenants; whether the agreements to purchase have yet been lodged with the Estates Commissioners; and, if not, will they ask the landlord or his representative for an explanation of the matter.

Mr. CHERRY: The Estates Commissioners inform me that proceedings have been instituted for the sale to them of the estate of Mr. Richard Davoren, comprising tenanted, untenanted, and demesne lands, and including the lands of Killaconna. The matter is at present in the hands of an inspector for inquiry and report.

Knockhall Grazing Farm.

Mr. JAMES O'KELLY (Roscommon, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Congested Districts Board have completed the purchase of a grazing farm at Knockhall, County Roscommon, from Mr. McGuire; and whether in the distribution of this land, the Congested Districts Board will have due regard to the fact that, in its immediate neighbourhood, there are several occupiers of small uneconomic holdings, and to the feeling that a preference should be given to such occupiers of land.

Mr. CHERRY: The Congested Districts Board have agreed to purchase the property in question, which is situate in a non-congested district. In such case the Board, after providing for the wants of congested districts, may enlarge the holdings of neighbouring occupiers in non-congested districts, but under the existing law they cannot enlarge such holdings of which the rateable value exceeds £5. Until the purchase has been completed the Board cannot give any undertaking as to how they will exercise their discretion in this particular case.

Curraghmore Farm.

Mr. DELANY (Queen's County, Ossory): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether Mr. Robert V. White, Stillorgan, County Dublin, has created a new tenancy in the farm of Curraghmore, for a term of thirty-one years, in favour of Mr. Peter Roe, who has held the farm under the eleven months system for some years; and whether, in view of the fact that Mr. White proposes selling his estate in Queen's County to the tenants, and that this farm of 200 acres is required for the enlargement of the small holdings in the district, he can say what course the Commissioners are going to adopt with regard to this transaction.

I beg also to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Estates Commissioners have received a resolution passed by the Borris in-Ossory branch of the United Irish League, calling their attention to the fact that Mr. Robert V. White, Stillorgan, County Dublin, is endeavouring to dispose of his estate at Sheirk, Curraghmore, and elsewhere in Queen's County, to his tenants, whilst refusing to sell the untenanted land to the Commissioners for the purpose of enlarging the uneconomic holdings in the locality; and, if so, can he say whether the Estates Commissioners propose to approve of this sale.

Mr. CHERRY: The Estates Commissioners are not aware that a tenancy of the farm at Curraghmore has recently been created. Proceedings for the sale of Mr. White's estate are pending before the Commissioners, and the vendor has offered to sell to them portion of his untenanted lands. The Commissioners have expressed their willingness to purchase the lands at Kilpurcel and Doon, but are not prepared to purchase the Curraghmore farm, as it is unsuitable for their purpose. The matter of the estate generally is under the Commissioners' consideration.

Borris-in-Ossory Untenanted Lands.

Mr. DELANY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that Mr. Lyster has refused the price offered him by the Estates Commissioners for his untenanted land at Cappagh and Monea, near Borris-in-Ossory, Queen's County; and can he say whether the Commissioners propose putting the compulsory provisions of the Evicted Tenants Act into operation on this estate for the purpose of reinstating William Phelan, an evicted tenant, in view of the fact that those farms have remained untenanted ever since the eviction some twenty years ago.

MR. CHERRY: Mr. Lyster has refused the Estates Commissioners' estimated price for the untenanted land in question. The case of William Phelan is at present in the hands of an inspector, upon the receipt of whose report the Commissioners will consider what action they should take in the case.

Irish Board of Works Loans.

MR. FFRENCH: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the Irish Board of Works refuse to lend money to farmers to carry out improvements where they have made their bargain with the landlord, and paying him a certain percentage on the purchase money, except on the old title; will he explain why the Board of Works refuse to advance money on the tenant's new title; and what is the objection where tenants have purchased within the zones or the bargain sanctioned by the Estates Commissioners.

MR. RUNCIMAN: Loans to tenants purchasing under the Act of 1903, are not refused by the Board of Works pending completion of sale, provided the tenants can produce receipts for rent showing that, in the event of the sale from any cause falling through, they would not be liable for more than twelve months rent—an arrear of a year's rent being a barrier to a tenant's loan. Purchasing tenants cannot however be treated as owners, until the fee simple of their holdings has been legally transferred to them by the issue of the Land Commission Vesting Order.

Omagh Postmaster.

MR. MULDOON: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether his attention has been called to the fact that two telegraph messengers in the employment of the Post Office were engaged in delivering religious tracts through the town of Omagh on 15th February last when they were supposed to be on duty; whether this took place with the assent and approval of the postmaster there, whose name was attached to the tracts distributed, and whether replies were requested to be sent to the postmaster at the post office; whether there is any previous record against this postmaster for similar proceedings; whether he is aware that this action has produced much local irritation; and whether it is in accordance with the regulations that distributions of this nature and character can be made gratuitously by officials of a public department.

THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON, Tower Hamlets, Poplar): My attention had already been called to the postmaster's action, which was improper and indiscreet; and I had taken such notice of it as seemed to me desirable.

Education Bill.

MR. BRIDGEMAN: I beg to ask the Prime Minister if he can say when the Second Reading of the Education Bill will be taken.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. ASQUITH, Fifeshire, E.): I can make no statement at present.

The Budget.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN (Worcestershire, E.): Will the Chancellor of the Exchequer at any time before Easter be able to fix a date for the introduction of the Budget—to indicate when it is likely to be brought in?

MR. ASQUITH: I will consider that.

Imprisonment of Unemployed Leaders at Manchester.

MR. CLYNES asked—in accordance with private notice—the Secretary of State for the Home Department if his attention had been drawn to the case of certain men, local leaders of a body of unemployed at Manchester, who had been sent to prison on the unsupported evidence of a man who confessed he had been twenty-four times in prison, and whether he would call for a report of the case and consider the advisability of reducing the sentences?

MR. GLADSTONE: The case had not previously been brought to my notice. I am asking for a report and will communicate with the hon Member.

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES.)

Sir **WILLIAM BRAMPTON GURDON** reported from the Committee of Selection; That they had discharged the following Members from Standing Committee A. Mr. Solicitor-General for Ireland and Dr. Shipman (in respect of the Housing of the Working Classes (Ireland) Bill); and had appointed in substitution (in respect of the Housing of the Working Classes (Ireland) Bill); Mr. Russell and Sir George White.

Report to lie upon the Table.

NEW BILL.

FIRE INQUESTS BILL.

"To provide for the holding of Fire Inquests," presented by Sir Henry Cotton; supported by Sir William Holland, Mr. Starkey, Mr. Lehmann, Mr. Yoxall, and Mr. Richardson; to be read a second time upon Friday 1st May, and to be printed. [Bill 183.]

IRISH UNIVERSITIES.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. BIRRELL, Bristol, N.), in asking leave to introduce a Bill to make further provision with respect to University Education in Ireland said: In describing the main and salient features of a long-promised, painfully delayed, and much misunderstood measure, I think I may safely promise to be reasonably brief. I pray I may be intelligible, and if heaven comes to my aid even businesslike. At all events no accents of party will mar the dignity of my theme, and I will promise to be as dull as I can. I have only one preliminary observation to make, but I must make it in bare justice to my old friend, former colleague, and immediate predecessor in the office I hold. Mr. Bryce has been exposed to a certain amount of acidulated criticism because, on the eve of his departure for Washington, he, being still Chief Secretary and knowing who his successor was to be, thought fit in Dublin in answer to an important northern deputation to give the outlines of the University measure which the Government then hoped in a short time to be able to introduce to the notice of the House. It has been suggested that Mr. Bryce was hardly justified in taking this course, that he was doing something which added quite unnecessarily to the burden of his successor. Mr. Bryce was fully justified in doing what he did. He had acquainted his colleagues with the nature and character of his proposals, and he had asked and obtained my permission to receive and address the deputation. He believed, and I believed, and for the matter of that I still believe, that it was desirable and helpful that he before leaving Dublin for good should publicly place on record what his plan was and the measure—the very large measure—of support which that plan had undoubtedly received. But the absent are always in the wrong. Mr. Bryce is now absent in Washington busily, and as I think the House will agree, nobly, occupied in removing one by one all possible causes of dispute between ourselves and the United States, and I am sure no one would wish that he should be exposed to any criticism in this House which he really does not deserve, and to which he cannot reply. Mr. Bryce left Dublin for Washington; and I left Whitehall for Dublin. When the Prime Minister, much to my dismay and amazement, for the thought of going to Ireland had never entered my mind, asked me whether I was willing to go there, I, with that frankness which the Prime Minister, exhibiting always himself, is entitled to expect from others, told him that, were it not for the hope of being able to deal with this University question, nothing could induce me to make myself responsible for a single week for the government of Ireland. I had the courage to believe that this hope of mine was not groundless; and in pursuit of it I am willing to admit I crossed to Dublin. This University question is not a sentimental question. I disclaim altogether the notion of being a man of sentiment. I am nothing of the kind. The proper provision of higher education in Ireland, cheap, popular, and good—above all good—is, in my judgment and the judgment of everyone who has given attention to the subject, a vital necessity. I thought so before I took up the office of Chief Secretary, and every hour I have been in it, every deputation I have received, every resolution I have read and torn up, all the experience I have gained—and it has been by no means inconsiderable—has intensified my conviction that Ireland not only needs it—to tell the truth, we all need it, this House, as much as any other assembly of men, needs it—but what Ireland eagerly needs and demands is good teaching and mental discipline. In things material, in things necessary for the defence of our island home, we all aim at being at least twice as strong at sea as any two foreign nations. I only wish we were equally bent on being half as intelligent on land. If hon. Members during their short Easter holiday would take the opportunity to visit Strasburg—a place which evokes many bitter, black memories, associated as it is, and has been for centuries past, with war and a double aggression—they would see what the people of Germany are doing for the people of Alsace; and I think they would discover that, after all, foreign Universities may do this country, during every hour of every day of the academic year, a considerable amount of injury by way of competition. Something has been done in England, Scotland, and Wales to supply this undoubted want. A great number—I think, ten—of teaching Universities have of recent years sprung up among our great and murky towns—Manchester, Liverpool, Leeds, Sheffield, and last, but by no means least, Birmingham, are now being associated in the minds of their younger citizens, not merely with docks and warehouses, not merely with shops and factories, least of all with gaols, lunatic asylums, and workhouses, but nobler structures from which are streaming forth the inspiring traditions, the ever-strengthening traditions, of University life and training. Ireland must not be left out. What is the present provision for university education in Ireland? There are two Universities in Ireland, one founded by Queen Elizabeth, and the other founded by Queen Victoria—two famous women, but separated by a long distance of time. The elder foundation is, of course, the University of Dublin, so inextricably entangled with its one College of Trinity as to become known throughout the world as Trinity College, Dublin. Everybody knows Trinity College, Dublin, her imposing site—one of the noblest in Europe—her magnificent buildings, her famous library with its priceless manuscripts, her gardens, her proud memories in science, in literature, and in mathematics. Among its *alumni* are lawyers, doctors, parsons, mostly of the Protestant persuasion, all the world over, and I do not suppose there is in this House a man, I will not say who is happy enough, but who has not at one time or another in his life been preached to, prescribed for, or a worse and more cruel fate than that, cross-examined as to character by some member of Trinity College, Dublin. This great foundation is not only splendidly constituted, but also splendidly endowed. Her revenues from what may be fairly called public sources have been estimated at exceeding £50,000 a year. The generosity of her sons, by private bequests and otherwise, have greatly added to her wealth, and the fees of her numerous students are no more than an increment of her income. It has been calculated that her income from all sources does not fall far short of £90,000 a year. It has been sometimes said that she is the richest college or University in our Empire; but this is not the case, for Edinburgh, "mine own romantic town," as Scott called it, has an annual revenue of £117,000 a year, and her capital resources have been lately calculated at £750,000, which leaves out of account all her magnificent buildings, splendid medical school, McEwan Hall, and all things of that kind. But though Trinity College, Dublin, is not so wealthy as Edinburgh, she is still comfortably off. As Universities go, Trinity, Dublin, must be pronounced in this matter of religious tests, at all events, to be in the van of progress. Roman Catholics were admitted to her degrees in 1793. It is, perhaps, a little remarkable that in a Roman Catholic country Roman Catholics should not have been admitted to the only University in that country until more than 200 years after its foundation; but in these matters it does not do to be too particular, and so far as the cash emoluments are concerned, everybody has been admitted to them in Trinity without any regard to creed or religious opinions since 1873; and in this respect, although the dates are rather remarkable, Trinity contrasts favourably with Oxford and Cambridge. With justice or without, Trinity College remains what she was from the first, a great, proud, and historical Protestant institution. She has to-day some thousand students, of whom a hundred or thereabouts are Roman Catholics. The number of Presbyterians is even less, for the indisposition of Presbyterians to come to Trinity is even more marked than that of the Roman Catholics. She gives her degrees to women, whom, however, she admits on merely passing a written examination, without regard to residence, except so far as that is necessary for the purposes of examination. Ireland's other University—the Royal University, founded in 1879, replaced Queen's, established in 1850. The Royal University is not, strictly speaking, a University at all, for she teaches nothing. She merely examines, mainly, except in the medical schools, by written questions, all who proffer themselves for that purpose, and she awards those who obtain a sufficient number of marks in these examinations a degree. She has no professors or teachers of her own; she needs none. An army of examiners serves her turn. Her buildings are never crowded with students, save for the purpose of being examined; her laboratories are empty save during the examination period; people come to the Royal University not to learn, but to answer questions. The Royal University has an annual income of £20,000 a year; but my old friend "the predominant partner" must not too readily take credit to himself for generosity in this respect towards poor Ireland, because the whole of this £20,000 comes from the Irish Church Fund. What Ireland would be, or where I should be, without this Church Fund I dare not think. It is indeed a horn filled with plenty. It took over in 1869, and I hope the House will bear this in mind, the £26,000 a year which up to that date appeared annually on our Votes for the maintenance of Maynooth. The £26,000 a year was then capitalised at fourteen years' purchase, and the sum—a very large sum—was a grant from the Irish Church Fund. That was Mr. Gladstone's bargain, and I quite agree with what was said yesterday, that that indeed was the day of grants. If this Royal University does not teach, who does prepare for the degrees that University confers, who does teach the students who only present themselves to its walls in order to proceed to further degrees? These young men and women are taught at one or other of four colleges, at Magee College, or private establishments, and in some cases, not many, by solitary work. The bulk of the students who avail themselves of the Royal University are educated at these private establishments or by solitary studies; the majority of them do not proceed from the colleges I have referred to. These four colleges are the three Queen's Colleges at Belfast, Cork, and Galway, and the Catholic University College in Dublin, so long and so honourably associated with the name of Dr. Delany, and with which the famous medical college in Cecilia Street is closely allied. It may be said to form a medical faculty and a medical college under the headship of Dr. Delany. This Royal University, mere examining body as she is, has done good work in Ireland. She has stimulated ambition by placing degrees within the reach of thousands who never could have gone to Trinity for half a dozen good reasons. The standard of examinations, particularly in her honours subjects, has been maintained at a high standard. Those who have obtained a degree in honours at the Royal University have got something of which they may well be proud. There are those, I know, who sneer at examinations. I am not one of them. I admit I have always stood in dread of them. I think the House hates quotations, fond as I am of them myself; but in reading over again Sir William Hamilton's "Discussions" I came across a famous passage from the great scholar Melancthon on the subject of examinations. I think I will not read it, but I will refer anybody to page 768 of Sir William Hamilton's book. I will read a little bit of it—

> "Examination, therefore, may be called the life of studies, without which reading, and even meditation, is dead. Against prejudice and error there is no surer antidote than examination; for by this the intellect is explored, its wants detected and supplied, its faults and failings corrected. Examination likewise fosters facility of expression, counteracts perturbation and confusion, inures to coolness and promptitude of thought. Not less useful is examination in restraining the course of youthful study within legitimate boundaries. Nothing is more

hurtful, as nothing is more common, than vain and tumultuary reading, which inflates with the persuasion without conferring the reality of erudition. Wherefore, if examination brought no other advantage than that it counteracts the two greatest pests of education, found indeed usually combined, sloth, to wit, and arrogance, for this reason alone should examination be cherished in our Universities. Against sloth there is no goad sharper or more efficacious than examination; and as to arrogance, examination is the very school of humility and improvement."

Perhaps that is the reason why I have always shunned examination.

> " By no other discipline is a soaring conceit so effectually taken down, and this is the reason why self-satisfied pretenders ever fly examination, whilst those who think less of the little that they know than of the much they know not, resort to it as the most efficacious means of improvement."

What I would ask the House to bear in mind is that the Universities which Melancthon had in mind when he wrote what I have just quoted were teaching Universities, and the examinations which he so greatly, and I think so justly valued, were conducted under the guidance and control, though not, I believe, under the sole guidance and control, of the professors and teachers of the Universities themselves, and they were directed to test minutely discipline and training, and not merely verbal memory or a glib repetition of text books. Between this examining University and the four colleges I have named at Belfast, Cork, Galway, and Dr. Delany's College in Dublin there is no avowed connection. It just so happens that if they want degrees, as most of them do, they come to the Royal University to get them, as in Ireland they have nowhere else to go to. It remains to ask how these four colleges are provided. The history of the three Queen's Colleges at Belfast, Cork, and Galway is a well-known history. It has been made a subject of constant research, and I would certainly advise anybody who wishes to get a clear history of these University proceedings in Ireland to study at least the first few pages of the final Report of what is called the Robertson Commission. I do not know who wrote that Report, but it is certainly a masterpiece of lucid explanation; and there you will find all you need know upon these questions. These three colleges were founded by Sir Robert Peel in 1845. In intention I have no doubt they were excellent, but in Cork and Galway they have entirely failed to fulfil that intention, for the simple reason that no pains whatever seem to have been taken to find out what Irishmen want. You may in Ireland sometimes succeed in sending a man to prison against his will, but never to college. But there are the colleges, very handsome buildings. The Belfast College—I do not know whether there was a scandal or not—it is said, was meant for Cork and the Cork College for Belfast. I do not know that it really matters much now. They are there, and they were paid for by Parliament. At this present moment this college at Belfast costs the Exchequer on an average of the last five years, because the amount varies a little according to the expense of repairs and the like, £13,101; Cork, £11,252; Galway, £10,586; a total of £34,939. When you have added to that certain extra payments from time to time you find that the total cost of these three colleges annually on the average of the last five years, amounts to £36,500. The number of students in these colleges to-day is as follows: at Belfast, 390; at Cork, 261; and at Galway, 111—in all, 762. But it is very important to bear in mind that these figures were much larger at the date of the determination of the old Queen's University. The old Queen's University only gave its degrees to students who had attended the colleges, and, therefore, it kept out from its examination those external bodies, private establishments who now send up the greater half of the persons to be examined. Before the date or at the date of the determination of the Queen's University, Belfast, instead of having as now, only 390 students, had 508 students. Cork instead of having only 261 students had 327, and Galway instead of having only 111 students had 208. In all in these days there were 1,043 students at the three colleges, whereas now there are only 762. Now there remains to be considered what I call Dr. Delany's College, the Catholic University College in Dublin, and the Medical School. What public money do they get? Well, being frankly Roman Catholic institutions with a Jesuit at the head, of course it is not to be supposed that they can have one penny of public money. Yet without some assistance how could they have kept going all these years even in their present half-starved and ill-conditioned state? The answer is that by arrangement outside this House they are paid some £7,000 a year out of the £20,000 allotted as the endowment of the Royal University. The Royal University gets £20,000 a year from the Irish Church Fund, and about one-half of this sum is annually absorbed in maintenance and upkeep of the University, and the very heavy cost of the examination, whilst the other half is spent on the endowment and establishment of certain fellowships. The whole history of these fellowships will be found on page 6 of Lord Robertson's Commission Report. There are about thirty-nine or forty of these fellowships, each of which is £400 a year. They are distributed amongst the colleges at Belfast, Cork and Galway and the Magee College. These fellowships are assigned and allotted to the professors at the several colleges. In the case of Belfast, Cork and Galway colleges, the professor does not get the whole £400 a year, because he has to bring into the account the salary at the colleges, but the sum is made up. Dr. Delany's College has something like fifteen or sixteen fellowships, and there is one at the Magee College, and they receive the £400 a year. Consequently, as a matter of fact, the Roman Catholic University College and the Medical School do receive out of this £20,000 endowment something a little under £7,000 as being their share, and these fellowship monies. The upshot of all this is that at the present moment the Exchequer finds the sum of £36,500 a year for the maintenance and upkeep of the three Queen's Colleges. The Royal University College gets £20,000 out of the Irish Church Fund and the Roman Catholic University College and Medical School gets £7,000 a year out of that £20,000 by way of indirect endowment. That being the provision for higher education in Ireland—assuming reform to be necessary, and all the Commissions, Reports and evidence put that, I think, beyond the possibility of doubt—there are only two ways of handling this problem. Some federation is unfortunately necessary. Cork College I hope has a great future before it. I do not believe she is at the present time strong enough nor are the classes sufficiently well attended to establish Cork with a University of her own. Galway, in which I feel great interest, is in a weaker position than Cork, and not perhaps so well situated for the purpose. Therefore some federation of these outlying colleges is absolutely necessary. The question is: Are you going to federate as much or as little as possible? That is where I admit the present proposals of the Government do undoubtedly come into collision with Mr. Bryce's scheme, but it is only fair to remember that Mr. Bryce's scheme has been greatly criticised since he formulated it, whilst he has not been in a position to attend here and the force of these criticisms he has not been able to appreciate. The big federal scheme which the Government have rejected was to include in one University Belfast in the north, Cork in the south, Galway (as an affiliated college it i s true) in the west, and Trinity College, Dublin, with her 300 years behind her, and a new college in Dublin. All these colleges were to be the colleges of one university under one federal centre. Thus you would get a number of states, each with its own code of state rights which would be most jealously guarded and subject to the federal control of a senate, meeting, I suppose, in Dublin. When I began to go down into the depths of the problem in Ireland I found that this big federation scheme outside Trinity College altogether was very unpopular. The three Queen's Colleges, all of which I visited, and which were to be states in the new federation, were strongly opposed to the scheme. "A sprawling University," as it was rather rudely called, can never be a popular Unievrsity. In these matters of Universities local patriotism, the *genius loci* as it is called, plays, and must play, a great part. State rights, federal rights, the rights of the colleges to govern themselves, so far as is consistent with their being members of a federal body, must give rise to much trouble and future difficulty. State rights and federal rights give rise to wars among human forces, and in Universities, although there is no bloodshed, they give rise to wars of pamphlets and bitterness, and, apart from bloodshed, the one kind of quarrel is as bad as the other. No quarrels are so fierce as those begotten by academical rivalry. I think that the academical difficulties which press upon me arise from the fact that the outlying colleges of Cork and Galway do require, and I think they are justly entitled to require, a large measure of autonomy. The question is how much autonomy you can give to outlying colleges consistent with their being part of a federal University. There are a great many people in Dublin no doubt who would like to see a two-college system in Dublin alone. They would have liked to see a another college in Dublin admitted into the old University side by side with Trinity College. To the sentimentalist that is a very attractive idea and to the economist I am bound to say that it at first sight seems to be perfectly common sense. But Trinity College, Dublin, declined the proposal,and if it is to be carried out it must be done by Parliamentary force, and this to me, I frankly admit, robs the scheme of all its attractiveness. The two colleges, the old and the new, would begin by hating each other. The notion that colleges love one another simply because they are in juxtaposition to one another is a total error. Indeed, college life is rather apt to stiffen into and breed dislike. Sometimes it almost amounts to acute feeling. The present Prime Minister and the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition are both Cambridge men and were at the same college. I am also a member of that University, but of another college, far more ancient than Trinity College, though not so well endowed. Yet when I asked the Prime Minister whether he had been inside Trinity Hall he was not content with a negative, but added words which seemed to me words almost of contumely. I will not ask the right hon. Gentleman opposite whether he has been in Trinity Hall, because I should be sorry to run the risk of getting the same kind of answer from him. I find with regard to the two-college scheme in Dublin that, although it may be attractive at first sight to a great many people, they all recognise that the position of Trinity puts it almost, if not entirely, out of the region of practical policy. Whether Trinity is wise or foolish is no concern of mine. Putting, therefore, the two-college scheme on one side, I also found the big federation scheme unpopular with all its component parts. Therefore I confess that after a time, with great reluctance, I found myself more and more driven to find the solution of this difficult problem in a direction which should be free both of this hostility and this unpopularity. Coming now to the plan of the Government itself, I have approached the question in a spirit of the most genuine humility. I have sought advice and counsel from an enormous number of persons, Protestants as well as Catholics, inside Trinity and outside Trinity, laity and clergy, and I have not the least desire in any way to associate my own personality with this University question. My only anxiety was to come speedily to some creditable and safe solution; and I believe the proposals that I am now about to make, when they have been subjected to that degree of criticism which, of course, proposals involving so much detail must necessarily be, will be found to have received and to be worthy of receiving, an extraordinary amount of support throughout the length and breadth of Ireland. I now turn to our proposals, and I say at once that by the first clause in the Bill we propose that His Majesty, if he pleases to do so, by charter found two new Universities in Ireland; these two Universities to have their seats respectively in Dublin and in Belfast—two Universities, with bodies corporate, under such names respectively as His Majesty may be pleased to determine. This question of names is, of course, in a certain sense a very important one. I have no ambition to be earthly godfather to these heavenly lights, which will, I hope, continue to dominate the firmament of learning long centuries after all of us have ceased to be. Therefore, at present I leave the question of their names to be hereafter considered. I am told by my academic friends in Belfast that they lean to the name for their University of "The University of Belfast." In Dublin differences of opinion, I dare say, may arise. Some think they would like the University in Dublin to be called "St. Patrick's University." Others think "The University of Ireland" should be chosen. All these things are matters for discussion, and after all a rose under any other name will smell as sweet.

In Belfast there will be put one college. In that respect the University of Belfast will resemble the University of Dublin, which has one college—Trinity. Belfast will have only one college, the present Queen's College; and it will not be able to have any other except, of course, by a subsequent Act of Parliament. Dublin will have three constituent colleges, and three only—Cork, Galway, and the new college, with a charter and an incorporated body in Dublin. Cork and Galway will also have to have new charters, and reconstructed governing bodies of a character I will describe in a moment. Neither Belfast nor Dublin will have any power to add to their constituent colleges, although they will have, and must have, severely restricted powers of affiliation, a word which has now become familiar in connection with the University question. The existing Royal University will be dissolved as from some appointed day, and its buildings, property, and endowments will be dealt with in a manner mentioned in the Bill. It is suggested, as a matter of finance, that the £20,000 from the Irish Church Fund shall be divided into two equal parts, and that the University in Belfast shall take £10,000 for maintenance and the new University in Dublin the other £10,000 for maintenance. In neither of these Universities will a religious test of any kind be permitted. Clause 3 of the Bill will read: "No test whatever of religious belief shall be imposed on any person as a condition of his becoming or continuing to be a professor, lecturer, fellow, scholar, exhibitioner, graduate, or student of, or of his holding any office or emolument or exercising any privileges, in, either of the two Universities or any college of those Universities. Nor shall any preference be given to or any advantage be withheld from any person on the ground of religious belief." That applies just as much to the new University in Belfast as it does to the new University in Dublin. Nor is it proposed that the professors who accept office should enter into any long and rambling declarations as to what they will do or will not do, or will say or w ll not say, as they do at present under a somewhat elaborate undenominational system. There will be no test, nor any of these preliminary declarations as to what the professors are expected to do. It will be asked, who are the governing bodies? These two new Universities will be governed academically by their Senates, and these Senates, after a very short space of time, will ultimately be bodies elected for the most part. The Crown reserves its right of making certain nominations; but the Senates will be academically elected bodies, and anybody who has the honour of finding himself a member hereafter of either of these Senates will be so because he has received the confidence and the votes of the professors and graduates of these Universities. They will be academically elected bodies. The details of the composition of the permanent Senates will be hereafter a matter of discussion; they will be found set out in the schedule to the Bill, which the House will have a full opportunity of discussing.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR (City of London): I do not think the right hon. Gentleman has made it clear whether the right of the Crown to nominate will be a perpetual right. Will it lapse after a few years?

Mr. BIRRELL: No, it will be a perpetual right. But the thing has to be set going in the first instance. Therefore it is proposed in the charters of these Universities that both the Senate in Belfast and the Senate in Dublin shall be nominated for a period of five years. The names will be found in the charters. It is impossible in matters of this sort to state these things in a Bill which of necessity has to be a good deal of a skeleton. But it is essential that the House should be able to have the whole thing before it in all its details, and although charters from the Crown have to be dealt with delicately, I have caused to be prepared preliminary drafts of the charters of the Universities in Dublin and Belfast, and of the new college in Dublin, and of the new charters of Cork and Galway, and I propose to lay on the Table all those charters in their preliminary drafts as Parliamentary Papers along with the Bill. So the House will be in full possession of them, I hope, in a very few days—a considerable time before the Easter holidays. Hon.

Members who like to pay sufficient attention to the subject will be in possession of the full details of the scheme. As to the proposed size of the Senates, so far as we have got at present the Dublin Senate is composed of thirty-six members and the Belfast Senate of thirty-five. I deprecate very much any inquiry as to the religious beliefs of these gentlemen and ladies—there are two ladies on the first nominated Senates. I know it is most difficult to prevent questions arising upon that point. I may say I am informed by my theological scouts—I have no knowledge myself, I cannot be expected to have knowledge of the religious beliefs of seventy or eighty gentlemen and ladies with whom I have only been brought into contact on a purely academic subject—I am informed that on the Belfast nominated Senate there is one Roman Catholic and on the Dublin nominated Senate there are seven Protestants. Amongst them I am glad to notice the name of my hon. friend opposite the Member for the University of Cambridge, and I may be permitted to express the hope that, if all goes well, he will succeed in infusing into the new University some portion of his own passion for the Humanities, and even, it may be, some trace of his own exquisite scholarship. The permanent constitution of these two Senates will be found stated in the first schedule of the Bill. I will indicate very roughly what it is in Dublin. The Chancellor of the University, the Vice-Chancellor, the three presidents of the constituent colleges of Dublin, Cork, and Galway, the persons nominated by His Majesty, one at least of whom is to be a woman. Then the three colleges of Dublin, Cork, and Galway will elect fourteen. I have no doubt by that means the professorial body will be largely represented on the governing body. Convocation will elect five, and there are powers for the co-optation of six. I merely mention this as a scheme which, on the whole, after careful consideration, commends itself to the mind of the Government, but in no way, I need scarcely say, as being a final settlement of the composition of this permanent body. Our object is to make it an academic body, and to prevent anything like *ex officio* representation appearing upon it, in order that the University graduates and professors hereafter may have full power of representing themselves. The composition of the Belfast body is somewhat different. There is the Chancellor and they propose to have two pro-Chancellors. They are very anxious to honour Sir Donald Currie in his old age for his great generosity and the interest he takes in this subject. I only regret that Lord Kelvin has disappeared before this dear wish in his heart has been realised. Then the Crown nominates, the professors elect, the graduates elect, and the Lord Mayor for the time being, the president for the time being of the Belfast Chamber of Commerce, and the chairman of the board of management of the Royal Victoria Hospital have all got places on the permanent Senate of Belfast University. Now, the governing bodies of Cork and Galway have to be considered, because a great part of the success of the new university in Dublin depends upon Cork and Galway becoming flourishing constituent centres. They are at present governed by a president and six of the professors, a close corporation. For reasons I need not give, these two colleges have never in any way tapped the resources of the parts of the country where they are situated. I do not believe there is any part of the country where there is a larger supply of eager students, men, not wealthy, but anxious to learn, and if the governing bodies are reconstructed they will largely increase their numbers. There has been no difficulty whatever in the reconstruction of these bodies. Nothing has been more gratifying to me. They have been reconstructed so that they will contain some twenty persons. All classes and creeds have combined to express their willingness to work in any scheme of this kind. Therefore we shall have no difficulty. Catholic bishops, Protestant bishops, the Catholic gentry, professional men, and persons academical are associated upon these temporary bodies. In the case of these bodies it is thought that three years will be sufficient as the period of nomination. After these three years they also will be academically elected bodies. Provision has been made in both cases for local representation.

Local authorities, county councils, and the like have agreed to participate in the work which, I am sure, will benefit them, even if it does not always benefit the bodies with whom they are associated. Then in Dublin University I do exactly the same thing. A three years nominated governing body to be replaced at the end of that time by an academically elected governing body. The powers of the Senate are similar in all cases and are set out in the charters, and the charters are really very much in the form of copies of other charters which are in existence. They have power to confer degrees and admit graduates and so on. There are some thirty powers which are very much the same as those which will be found in the charter of the new University of London or any other purely academic body. Questions, however, do arise as to the appointment of professors and as to what would happen on the appointment or dismissal of any professor. The Senates and governing bodies of these Universities must have the appointment of their professors. Here again difficulties arise with the outlying colleges. Some question has arisen as to how far Cork and Galway should have a right to send up three names to the Senate from which the Senate must choose, or whether the Senate should have a right to proceed outside and select somebody who is not in the list. That is a question on which there may be some difference of opinion. My own view is that as far as possible the dignity of the University should be kept up, because Universities have a tendency to disappear before active colleges. That is a matter which will be really the better for some discussion hereafter. Professors will be appointed and dismissed by the Senate. Then questions arise as to whether a professor dismissed should not have a right of appeal. I think he should, and accordingly the Bill provides that a professor who has been dismissed by the Senate should have a right to appeal to the visitor. The Crown reserves to itself and its successors the right of being the visitor both of this University in Belfast and of this new University in Dublin, and it will act through a Board of Visitors who will be nominated by the Crown as occasion arises, of course paying some attention to the nature of the dispute to be decided. Professors may be dismissed for a variety of reasons, some disciplinary reasons relating to character and the like, and sometimes it may be, but I hope very seldom, with regard to questions which have given rise to philosophical or religious discussions. The Crown reserves the right to appoint the Board of Visitors on all occasions when its authority is appealed to. Therefore I make it plain in the charter that it is to exercise these visitorial rights through the Board of Visitors who are to have regard to the nature of the dispute. There is one other matter I wish to mention, and that is the appointment of the professors of the new College of Dublin. The professors in the existing colleges of Cork and Galway go on. They hold their positions under tenure from the Crown during good behaviour and nobody wishes to interfere with them in going on and accepting professorships in the new University, and they will remain professors of the University on the old terms. When they die or retire the Senate will appoint their successors under the provisions of the charter. But the new college in Dublin is not in that position and professors will have to be appointed. I have thought this question out very carefully, and I do not think it is desirable that the nominated temporary Senate should have the appointment of the professors in the first instance of the new college, because when you come to study the composition of that new Senate and its professional character, it will be seen that a good many of its members would themselves be eligible for these posts. Therefore I have thought it desirable that these professors should be appointed by the Statutory Commissions which it is proposed to set up under this Bill of which there will be two, one for Belfast and one for Dublin. They will have to sit together for some time as it may be thought joint interests may arise, but otherwise they will be independent Commissions—Commissions of seven, four elected by the Senate and three nominated by the Crown. To these seven gentlemen I propose, in the first instance, to entrust the duty of appointing professors for the new college and, of course, of fixing their salaries. An important question arises as to the President of this new college in Dublin;

and I need scarcely say it is a very important subject. The first man who would occur to us is Dr. Delany, whom I have already mentioned and who has for many years devoted himself with great success and with the utmost industry to the education of Catholic youths in University College. But there are objections to that course which he appreciates himself, and he has written to me to say that he feels those objections prevail—he is seventy-six years of age—but his one desire is that this scheme should be a great success and he wishes, before he dies, to see a University in Dublin. There are some objections to starting with a clergyman, and there may be in some minds objection to starting with a Jesuit. I am bound to say that any Chief Secretary who has enjoyed the acquaintance of Dr. Delany will not feel that, but it will be felt in certain quarters, and I do think that until tradition grows up it is rather desirable that the head of this new college should be a layman, in order that the tradition should not spring up that the president has to be a clergyman. We all know how in our colleges of Oxford and Cambridge a tradition grows up and is preserved. Therefore, while I tender my thanks to Dr. Delany for his patriotism in this matter, I think it would be better that the president of this new college should be a layman—a Catholic layman and a younger man—in order that it should secure a good start under energetic and sympathetic rule. That is all I have to say on that subject. There is a very important subject with regard to all colleges of this kind and that is affiliation. The charter which the House will soon have an opportunity of reading, secures that the University may affiliate, or allow a constituent college to affiliate, an institution which in certain limited subjects is capable of giving University training. I have done my best in order that it may be made as strict as possible so that they shall not be at liberty, even if they desire it, to affiliate with those which cannot honestly be said to be doing University work. Unless you have a severely restricted right of affiliation your University may become a sort of conglomeration of secondary schools, and that is a thing to be avoided. The House may say what about Maynooth and Magee? Those are institutions known to us all. I have very little doubt, though they are not constituent colleges, in the charter of Bill that they will be affiliated by the Senate. With regard to Magee, that is a Presbyterian foundation, it educates both the Presbyterian clergy and the Presbyterian laymen. In its Arts schools it has always had an honourable connection with, and has sent persons every year to graduate at the Royal University, and I think it would interfere with the success of my scheme and would be unjust to the Presbyterian foundation were its rights not preserved. The same with regard to Maynooth, where, as we all know, Roman Catholic, clergy are educated. A University which ignores the clergy of the country starts at a great disadvantage. Maynooth has been very closely connected of late years with the Royal, and it has made it a condition that every person who enters its walls as a student shall have matriculated at the Royal. Its course is a long one of seven years, and the great majority of the students in the first three years take the Arts programme at the Royal and proceed to degrees. It would be a great hardship upon the Maynooth students if we prevented them from taking degrees at the University which takes the place of the Royal to which they have gone hitherto for their degrees. My own belief is that the Senate will affiliate both Magee and Maynooth. Then as to examinations. We shall take care that at the examinations conducted at Cork, Galway, or Dublin the local professors shall in every case be associated with an external teacher who will have a veto in deciding whether the person examined has shown a faculty and capacity for learning and benefiting by the teaching. That, and not the mere number of marks gained, is, I think, the way to get the greatest benefit from University teaching. The scheme will have sufficient safeguards to allow the professors who have actually taught to have an important voice in determining the questions and in judging answers. So that the degree attained at Galway should not be better or worse than that at Cork or Dublin in the estimation of learned men. It is a delicate problem, the difficulties of which arise from this particular federation. I think, if I may say so, there is wisdom in the course I have adopted in limiting the federation as much as possible. I say frankly I would much sooner that Cork and Galway, great and important places, were strong and powerful enough to run Universities of their own—I hope that Cork may yet be. But if it is not the case, we have to adopt limits, and those who have kindly assisted me in this matter have taken the utmost precautions to secure the general standard in the University. My right hon. friend the Secretary for War, who, like myself, is a great enthusiast in this matter, reminds me that I have not called attention to one clause in the Bill. That clause provides that the moneys paid to the governing body of the University or college, as the case may be, shall be used in accordance with their statutes, but no such sum shall be applied for the provision or maintenance of any church, chapel, or any other place of religious observance, or for the provision and maintenance of any theological or religious teaching. I say nothing on that subject. I think it is an object which some do ill to leave out, but at all events, it can be provided for out of other than public money, and I think that is in accordance with the general sentiment of this country. I have only now to refer to the finance of this great undertaking. The present charge upon the Exchequer is £36,500, the present charge on the Irish Church Fund is £20,000; that is the beginning and end of the public charge, so far as it goes. We propose to divide the £20,000 a year between the two new Universities, each of which will have £10,000, and we propose to increase the lump sum of £36,500 to £80,000. That is the provision by way of new endowment, £43,500. Opinions may differ whether that is enough or not; my own belief is that it is adequate for the occasion, that it will be enough if this Bill gets through to make it plain that these two Universities will be successful. That I regard as a *sine qua non*. I found Ireland in a state of profound scepticism as to whether, notwithstanding all its reports of this House and the eager promises of many of its leading men, the good day would ever come when such proposals could really be carried. I do not think there is much use expecting the want to be supplied by private beneficence or generosity, even in a country which unfortunately is not a great and wealthy community, such as is Liverpool, where the University has already been endowed with enormous sums. That cannot be; still, much can be looked for in Ireland, but not unless and until this House by passing this Bill inaugurates proposals on a scale to make it plain that the thing will succeed. When that has been done, we may confidently expect in Ulster, Belfast, and Dublin considerable endowments, it may be from the pence of the poor or from the investments of the rich, enabling suitable chairs to be properly endowed, and all the branches of learning fully represented in these new Universities. But we have got to do our duty first, and I think the sum I have named by way of endowment is adequate. The proposal which will be found in the schedule is that Belfast will get £10,000 for its University, part of the Irish Church Fund; it will also have £18,000 by way of annual endowment, making in all £28,000 a year. The new college in Dublin, of course, has got first of all to be built, and then endowed and maintained, and the proposal is that out of the moneys which I have suggested £32,000 a year shall endow and maintain the new University in Dublin when it has once been started. Then the income of the Queen's College, Cork, will be increased to £18,000 a year, and the income of Queen's College, Galway, will be increased to £12,000 a year. I think those sums are sufficient to meet the needs of the case. Building grants, of course, become necessary. Belfast has got fine buildings, but they are inadequate for the purpose of the University, and it is proposed that a grant of £60,000 should be made to the new University of Belfast to enable it to celebrate this auspicious occasion, as I trust it may be, and provide itself with the sizings and appearances of a University worthy of the distinguished province to which it belongs. I am told that a maximum sum for the purpose of the University and college in Dublin should be £150,000. That will not be sufficient to build on any scale a residential college; I think hostels and institutions of that sort will have to be left to private enterprise and generosity. But it will, I hope, be sufficient first of all to complete the present University buildings, which will be utilised, many of them, for college purposes. At present, for the greater part of the year the laboratories and the like stand empty, and those can be thrown in as college property, for college purposes. The college will have to be built representing all the dignity and social life of a college; a library, gymnasium, and reading-rooms may be necessary, and, of course, lecture-rooms, and a residence, it may be, for the principal.

Mr. LYTTELTON (St. George's, Hanover Square): A cricket field.

Mr. BIRRELL: I hope a cricket ground, which is, no doubt, an essential. I recognise that cricket is a faculty by itself. Then, Cork and Galway will receive very considerable sums also for the purpose of their buildings. I think the financial proposals will be found sufficient. I said I would not introduce any party aspect. I put before Unionists and Nationalists alike first the obligation of government, in which all of us, whatever our opinions may be, may be proud to take a share. I believe that the objections of Belfast to a University have largely disappeared during the last five or six years. Speaking from knowledge gained chiefly from academic sources, I can only say that there is the utmost enthusiasm in Queen's College, Belfast, for this new scheme. I believe the province is quite large enough to maintain a University, and the value of her degrees, and I am only sorry that Lord Kelvin did not live to become the first Chancellor of a University which, I hope, is destined to be great. As for religion, all I can say is that these new Universities start precisely on the same grounds. They are not denominational institutions, they are not marred and disfigured by tests of any sort or kind. The most anybody can say is that we are planting one University on what, I suppose, may be called Protestant soil, although there are many Roman Catholics in Ulster, and the other on what may be called Roman Cotholic soil, although there are many Protestants in Dublin and Cork, and some even in Galway. These Universities, as they grow, thrive, and develop, may, I dare say, develop some differences of tone and temper and disposition, but I believe the temple of learning is wide enough for both, and that there is room enough in Ireland to provide for Catholics and Protestants, and all eager and quick to learn, not merely in the arts, but in the exacter sciences, in mathematics, and engineering. If I have the good fortune to succeed where far greater men have failed, it will only be due to the fact that I have sought counsel on all sides, and have had no personal feeling in this matter. There is no originality about this scheme —anybody who likes may claim it as his own; but if we are all united in support of it we shall have done a great work for Ireland, and future generations may rise up and thank us.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That leave be given to bring in a Bill to make further provision with respect to University Education in Ireland."—(*Mr. Birrell.*)

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR (City of London): The right hon. Gentleman has dealt at length with a subject on which there is not only a great division in this House —that may perhaps be said of almost all subjects frequently before us—but on which there is a great division not merely between Parties. He has dealt with it in a manner and spirit which, I think, has been agreeable to everybody —to those who agree with and those who differ from him. I am one of those who agree with him, but I think I may speak even for those who do not when I say that no single word has fallen from him which can offend any susceptibilities. The right hon. Gentleman gave, as was proper, a brief preliminary historical statement leading up to his proposals. He gave us some account of the history of this question as it affects the Government of which he is a Member. I confess his explanations on that point have left me as puzzled as I was before. He told us that the late Chief Secretary had spoken with the authority of the Cabinet, not only when he announced an entirely different scheme, but when he announced that that scheme was the only one which

Ireland could ever expect from the present Administration. I am glad to say that different counsels have prevailed, but how the Cabinet can ever have authorised so sweeping and so unfortunate a statement from one of their Members I cannot imagine, nor do I know by what process the Cabinet have been converted to what I certainly think myself the far more reasonable and rational proposals which the right hon. Gentleman has now laid before us. The right hon. Gentleman told us that the only object which induced him to leave the Education Office and take up the difficult post of Chief Secretary was the hope of being able to settle this University question. I was touched by that statement. It also somewhat surprised me. It seemed to me there was rather a violent change between bringing in a Bill which was intended to destroy the denominational atmosphere in places of education in this country, and going across the Channel for the sole purpose of establishing a great academic institution in which religious belief and a denominational atmosphere were to prevail in the future. I do not know if the right hon. Gentleman could introduce into his measure for England the same broad recognition of facts which he has shown in his treatment of this Irish question. If he could I think we should be near a settlement of a subject which is almost as difficult of final solution, and leads to almost as embittered controversies on this side of the St. George's Channel, as the question of the University has done, or is likely to do, on the other side. I pass from the history which the right hon. Gentleman gave in his statement of Irish University education since it was begun in Ireland. It has not been on the whole a successful history, though much has been done; and I am glad to think, speaking as a Conservative and as a Unionist, that everything that has been done so far has been done by the Party of which I am a member. All the Bills mentioned by the right hon. Gentleman, without exception, have been passed into law as Conservative and Unionist measures. I hope that on this occasion the right hon. Gentleman will share with us and be able to claim for his Party at least an equal meed of praise from those who desire to see academic education for Ireland put in the position in which certainly it ought to be, and in which it is not at the present time. Of the plan itself I have very little to say. I quite agree that it is impossible for any Member of this House, who takes the trouble to examine into the existing state of higher education in Ireland, to be content to leave to an examining University the great charge of dealing with higher education for the larger part of the population. That is an intolerable situation. The right hon. Gentleman gave us a quotation from Melancthon containing a great eulogy of examinations, but, if I may venture to differ from such great authorities, I should like to express emphatically my dissent. I do not believe, as the right hon. Gentleman does, in the system of competitive examinations under which, I believe, the best interests of academic learning are now oppressed and smothered; nor do I personally believe that Melancthon would have supported this system of examinations. I have not looked into the question of German University education in the 16th century, but I rather suspect that what Melancthon referred to were the sort of controversies which are allowed to go on in this House between gentlemen on opposite sides, on which perhaps a more impartial and more learned jury had to pronounce, but which were actually very much in the nature of debates and not at all in the nature of these competitive examinations which have been invented for the perplexity of students and are not, in my opinion, in the best interests of academic training. However that may be, we all agree, whether we believe with the right hon. Gentleman and Melancthon or not as to examinations, or whether we believe in vain and tumultuary reading, which is my position—we are all of one mind in thinking that the teaching University is the only real way of carrying out the higher training of those who have entered into adult life and are just about to deal with the business of their profession or the business of promoting learning and research. Holding that view, I do not believe that, speaking broadly, a better plan could be devised —I am talking only of its main outline— than that which has been propounded to us by the Government. The scheme of Mr. Bryce included Trinity College, Dublin, within its purview. That would have been resented as an intolerable wrong by Trinity College itself, and would, I believe, have roused antagonism in every University body throughout England and Scotland. The Government have been certainly well advised in leaving that great institution which has done, is doing, and will do in the future so much for Ireland, to carry out the traditions which it has created, and which from day to day is proving itself worthy to administer the funds which in the past, and certainly in the present, are being used in the very best interests of the higher education of the country. Trinity College is safe, and is not touched by this Bill; I think that alone shows the great superiority of the measure which the right hon. Gentleman has proposed over the abortive suggestions that were made two years ago. The only point of doubt I should have about the scheme of the right hon. Gentleman, so far as I have been able to gather its import from the statements he has made, is as to whether he is right in altogether excluding the Crown from all appointments to the professorships. As I understand his plan, the country has to provide practically all the funds of the two institutions, and yet the whole of the appointments is to be left to the Senatus. I believe that would be perfectly right with regard to the majority of the appointments. But I have had some experience in this matter of selecting professors, and I am inclined to think the responsibility of the Crown in the matter is very often advantageously exercised. It is only by appointments through the Crown that you can be sure of not being unduly influenced by academic surroundings. The Senatus is almost certain to select the best men for the University if the charge is confined to members of the University, and I do not think there would be any partiality, while I am sure they would be judges of merit. But it is not certain always that the Senatus would be willing and anxious to go outside the limits of its own members. The Scottish Universities do constantly appoint professors who are not of the *alumni* of the Universities at which they are asked to lecture. My hon. friend the Member for the University of Cambridge, to whom the right hon. Gentleman made an eloquent, and I think, most deserved reference, has himself, I think, taught in at least two Universities besides the one which had the honour of giving him his education. Nevertheless, I am not quite sure—I put it rather tentatively—whether the right hon. Gentleman is wise, in the interests of academic learning, to hand over the whole of the University patronage to the Senatus of the institutions which he is about to create. That is not an opinion which is very commonly shared in the House. It may be an idiosyncrasy of my own; at all events I do not wish unduly to press it. That is the only criticism which I have to pass this evening on the scheme. I am not quite sure whether I quite understand the relation of the two new universities with Maynooth. It is most desirable, I agree with the right hon. Gentleman, that the clergy of any country should come into some kind of contact with their fellows, and should have an education in matters outside the relatively narrow range of theological subjects. But I do not gather that those who are ultimately to go through a theological course at Maynooth are to be in any sense resident, or to have the advantage, as I think, of admixture with laymen of their own age in the period of their going through their arts course. That may perhaps be inconsistent with the views of those who have to regulate such matters in Ireland. If so I regret it. I personally believe that the clergy of all denominations, without exception, would be better calculated to carry out their great work in later life if some part of their academic career at all events were passed in that general atmosphere of fellowship with their equals in age and allies in studies—an admixture which, so far as laymen are concerned, all who had been at Universities will admit is perhaps the most valuable gift the Universities can give to those who are educated within their walls—far better and more important than all the examinations of which the right hon. Gentleman or Melancthon has dreamt of. But, after all, when we touch this question of the education of the clergy in the Roman Catholic Church, the Protestant who deals with it touches upon matters on which he is little qualified to assert the opinion of those who differ from him in matters of religion. I do not desire to press unduly that point. Literally, I have no other commentary, I will not say of a hostile or even of a critical character, to pass upon the plan. It seems to me an absolutely sincere effort to solve a great difficulty. I do not believe that any of his predecessors in office could have proposed so good a plan with a chance of its being accepted—by which I mean that I think the opinion, both Roman Catholic and Protestant, in Ireland has greatly modified, matured, and developed since this question first came to the front about twenty years ago, and I do not believe that any of the right hon. Gentleman's predecessors in that period would have had the smallest chance of receiving the adhesion of, perhaps, Gentlemen below the gangway, but certainly of many in Ireland whom they represent, had they produced this scheme in other Parliaments. I am glad to think that at all events the opinion of the Roman Catholic majority of Ireland is modified in the direction of what I call a sound academic tradition, and I hope and think there has been some corresponding movement on the part of Protestants also. It is well known that I do not wholly agree with some of my best friends from Ireland behind me; they do not take the same view as I do on this question. However that may be, it must be plain to everyone acquainted with the matter that the general scheme which the right hon. Gentleman has turned out provides for Ireland academic institutions in the best sense of the word, institutions which ought to have and which I think will have the power of gradually building up a tradition of sound learning, unpolluted and unperverted by religious prejudice or bigotry on either side, having for their object the advancement of sound learning and the education of the rising youth of the country. If this Bill does, as I hope it will, become part of the law of the land we shall be able to look to Ireland as one can now look to Scotland and England as a country in which we have not allowed the highest, best, and most important of all national interests—education in its most important aspect, namely, higher education—to lag behind the example which has been set us by other nations on both sides of the Atlantic—an example which we have too long lagged behind, but which we now seem in a fair way to imitate, I hope to better, by giving our own special touch to this particular aspect of education and making it not merely as complete as any which the German, French, or American citizen now enjoys, but even yet more admirably fitted, more closely suited to the special needs and special character of our own country.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.): I am sure I am only giving expression to what is felt in every section of the House when I congratulate the Chief Secretary for Ireland on his courage in tackling this great problem at all. He has embarked upon this most dangerous voyage under peculiarly favourable auspices and, speaking for myself—and I know I am speaking the sentiments of my colleagues also—I tender my thanks to the Leader of the Opposition for the cordial and graceful speech which he has just delivered, in which he has given that consistent support which he has always given to what I agree with him in describing is, after freedom, the highest of all Irish interests. And there are two other names which I think ought to be mentioned by way of thanks, because it is a rare pleasure to an Irish Nationalist, either in this House or out of it, to be able to thank his political opponents. I desire to express my own personal deep gratification, and that of my colleagues, to the hon. Member for the University of Cambridge, who has accepted a seat upon the Senate of this new University, and who is willing to offer us in the great task before us his valuable services in keeping up the standard of education. And I think it would be ungracious on our part not to add a word of thanks to the Provost of Trinity College, who has assisted the right hon. Gentleman; he has set a high example of fair play and courage in this matter, and has promised his steady support to this Bill. The right hon. Gentleman will need all the support he can get, and yet I must say that after the proceedings that have taken place I am full of hope. The right hon. Gentleman required courage to embark upon this voyage. The Leader of the Opposition spoke of the history of Irish education as not a very successful one. I think he might have used stronger and more emphatic language, and said that it had been disastrous. The whole of that path has been strewn with wrecks. Sir Robert Peel in 1843 started the Queen's Colleges; then came the attempts of Lord Derby and Disraeli in 1866 and 1868; then Mr. Gladstone in 1873, with his great measure which brought his

Government to destruction; then pledges of Lord St. Aldwyn in 1885; then the pledge of the present Leader of the Opposition in 1889 and his famous Manchester letter in 1897; then the Robertson Commission in 1900 and its Report in 1903; and then the Bryce Commission of 1906. Yet throughout the whole of that period of sixty years, nothing substantial has been done to remedy the grievances of Ireland in this matter of University education. I have made a careful study of these things, and I believe the failure was mainly due to the fact that the problem has always been approached upon wrong lines. It is entirely unnecessary for any man to argue as to the desperate necessity for some remedy being applied and applied promptly. But there is this one most significant and striking fact which I think might impress anyone who is disposed to throw obstacles in the way of the right hon. Gentleman, viz., that throughout these sixty years there has not been one single British Member who has taken part in the government of Ireland, but has been converted at an early stage to the conviction of the crying necessity for a remedy being applied to the grievance in the matter of Catholic education. I will only make one quotation from Mr. Gladstone. In 1873, when introducing his measure, he said—

> "There are those who maintain that upon the whole, considering who Roman Catholics are, considering how little property they possess, how little it is possible for them to enter upon the higher culture, their state so far as University education is concerned is not very bad at the present. I hold on the contrary that it is miserably bad. I go further and I would almost say it is scandalously bad."

That was thirty-five years ago, and since that time nothing has been done. The only measure passed since then on the question of Irish University education has been that which resulted in the foundation of the Royal University, and the foundation of the Royal University was, I might say, a double-edged sword. I would be the last to deny that the Royal University did something for higher education in Ireland. It stimulated the ambition of some scholars, and afforded some of our poor people an opportunity of studying abroad which they would not otherwise have had, and in that way it did great good. But it was very much a case of supplying unwholesome food to a hungry man, for the food was unwholesome. The Robertson Commission, commenting on the action of the Royal University, used these remarkable words. The Report of the Commission, although it produced no result, was one of the greatest collections of opinion on this subject and on the whole question, and I entirely agree with the right hon. Gentleman that whoever drafted the Report was certainly a master of the art of exposition. What did it say?—

> "But while those who have administered the Royal University system have done their utmost to make it work well, and successfully, and smoothly, the system itself suffers from incurable defects. A false conception of learning was held up before the eyes of the students of Ireland, and apart from internal defects of organisation the Royal university has brought about one result which was doubtless unforeseen by its founders. It has seriously impaired the value of the University education which was in existence previous to this foundation. On this side its influence has been one of positive destruction."

That is absolutely true. While the Royal University has in some respects opened the paths of learning to some of our poor Catholic countrymen, it has also degraded in another respect the whole standard of University learning in Ireland, and has done as much harm as—some think even more than—it has done good. It is also true to say that from the day the Queen's Colleges were admitted to be a failure, for the last half-century, Ireland, which of all countries in Europe, owing to the peculiarities of its circumstances and its great lack of what I might call the raw material, requires more than any country to cultivate the intellect of its people, has been absolutely neglected by the Government in the matter of University education. The natural question that must arise is, after all the misrepresentation to which this whole question has been subjected for years,—Is this a scheme which the Catholics of Ireland will accept? In considering this great scheme, I wish at the outset to draw a distinction between principle and detail. It is an all-important distinction. The real question for us to consider at this stage is,—Has the right hon. Gentleman succeeded in drafting a scheme which will at the same time have an easy passage so far as the vested interests in Ireland are concerned, and meet the needs and satisfy the demands of the Catholics of Ireland? Therefore I put aside all details so far as this stage of the Bill is concerned, only saying one sentence as regards finance. That, of course, is a very important detail. I am bound to say it appears to me that the provision for the Dublin College is less than moderate in view of the great competition which it has to face in Trinity College. I earnestly press on the right hon. Gentleman that the grant which he mentioned is entirely insufficient. The providing of some residential college in Dublin as a nucleus for academic life in that city is a matter of vital importance, and it is all the more vitally important because, as hon. Members opposite know, Trinity College has a magnificent establishment and noble buildings, which I for one do not in the slightest degree grudge so long as Trinity College will help us to get fair play and equal treatment. The Robertson Commission specifically says—

> "If you decide to do this the new college in Dublin should be on the scale regarded by a University college of the first class, and which is intended to draw students from all parts of Ireland. If you are not going to endow it handsomely and in proportion to Trinity College you had better not do this thing at all."

I now come to the principle of this Bill, I say, first of all, that anybody who studies the debate on the Bill of 1883 will find that the scheme now presented to the House is free from all the great objections taken to Mr. Gladstone's scheme in that discussion which ended in the defeat of the Government. It was alleged in the first place that it was grossly unfair to the Catholics to leave them a single college without a penny endowment to compete against three richly endowed non-Catholic colleges; secondly, that it substituted for the healthy rivalry of more than one, a single University partaking in some degree of an examining board; thirdly, that this sole educational University was subject to restrictions of a most degrading character which would have made it a laughing stock of all the learning of Europe; fourthly, that Mr. Gladstone's scheme proposed to interfere with powerful institutions in Ireland against the will of those interested in them; and fifthly, that the University was to be subject to the headship of the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, making it more or less of a political institution. I do not know of any subject upon which opinion is more unanimous and strong in Ireland than on the question of "hands off" this matter as far as the Crown is concerned. One of the main causes of the prosperity of Trinity College has been the fact that the Castle and the Government have no power of interference whatever. What are the characteristics of the new University which the Chief Secretary proposes to set up in the City of Dublin? It is to be free and self-governing. I do not in the least degree quarrel with the provision the right hon. Gentleman announced in regard to the nomination by the Crown for a limited number of years, because in the ultimate form the University is to be absolutely free and self-governing. There is to be absolute freedom of teaching. We have been continually subjected to cruel calumny in this House by the accusation that we were seeking to establish in Ireland an institution in which there would be no freedom of teaching, and we have been told over and over again in this House and publicly and privately in the library and the smoking-rooms of this House that the difficulty some hon. Members experienced upon this question was that they could not give one penny of public money to encourage the foundation of higher learning where the teaching would be under the control of bishops and priests. I claim that the teaching in the proposed University will be as free as in any University in Europe. Modern history and modern philosophy will not be excluded subjects as under Mr. Gladstone's scheme of 1883. There will be no exclusions, and I entirely agree that it is a maimed University that excludes theology. We shall have a great faculty of theology in connection with our University, but we shall pay for it out of our own pockets, and we willingly accept the clause which prevents our spending one farthing upon religious teaching. There will be no excluded subjects. There is to be no attempt in this University scheme to interfere with the vested interests of any other great institutions, and, while it is not proposed to allocate a shilling of public money to any denominational purpose, the principle at least is recognised that something should be done and some step taken towards establishing an equality between all sections of the population in Ireland in the matter of endowment. The first question which the House is entitled to ask and which calls for an answer is, will a University founded on the principles set forth in the statement of the Chief Secretary be accepted by the Catholics of Ireland? I have no hesitation in saying "Yes" to that question. It will be accepted by the Catholics. There has in the past been a great deal of misconception and misrepresentation in discussing this question. Two things have always been assumed in the debates, public and private, that have taken place on University education for Ireland. First of all, it has been held that the demand put forward on behalf of Irish Catholics for University education in Ireland was purely a clerical demand; and, secondly, that in the matter of University education nothing would satisfy the Irish Catholics except a University strictly confined to Catholics and absolutely controlled by the prelates of their Church. To both these assumptions I give a most absolute and unqualified denial. This demand is not only not a clerical demand, but it is a demand passionately made by all thoughtful men in Ireland and even by many who do not share our faith. I challenge all hon. Members in this House, and particularly Nonconformist friends, to examine critically the scheme now put forward and point, if they can, to any one particular in which it is more clerical or less free than either Trinity College or the late Queen's University. On what ground can opposition be raised? Can such a proposal be objected to in a country where three-fourths of the population are Catholic, where the Protestants have already taken possession of Trinity College, and where there is a great flourishing Presbyterian institution in the North? The really important matter is that the thing will be free and there will be no tests and it will truthfully represent the feelings and beliefs of the students. I invite all who take an interest in this matter to scrutinise this Bill and view the institution from this point of view. We have been so continually taunted and misrepresented in this matter that I may be pardoned for dwelling upon it. I challenge anyone to point to one particular in which this proposed University and the charter are more clerical or less free than any other institution for higher education in this country or in Ireland. I will go further. Are hon. Members who have offered us over and over again Trinity College in full settlement of our demand aware that for 100 years no Protestant layman was allowed to be Provost? Are they aware that since the Queen's College, Belfast, was founded no layman has been Provost? Yet our college is to be started under the presidency of a layman. When I talk about freedom I am one of those who have deeply and firmly believed that true religion has no fear of the pursuit of truth, and furthermore I have believed that that religion which is afraid of the untrammelled and free pursuit of truth is doomed. This University is to be perfectly free, and the professors are not to be called upon to sign any undertaking. There is really a lot of unconscious hypocrisy in this House and in the country. I myself was a teacher in the old Catholic University which is going to be incorporated in this, and I was never asked to sign anything. But there is a discipline set up and maintained by this House in the Queen's University, which has been held up as a free institution and as a sample of free teaching. What have the professors of that college to do? The moment a man is appointed a professor of Queen's College he has to sign this—

> "I, A. B., do hereby promise that in lecturing and examining and in the performance of all other duties connected with my Chair, I will carefully abstain from teaching or advancing any doctrine, or making any statement derogatory to the truths of revealed religion or injurious or disrespectful to the religious convictions of any portion of my class or audience."

Who is to be judge? And that is your Government system of free teaching! The professors have to go beyond that, because they have to say—

> "I, moreover, promise to the President and Council that I will not introduce or discuss in my place or capacity as professor any subject of controversy, political or religious, tending to produce contention or excitement."

That is freedom. We will not degrade the professors in our Universities by requiring them to enter into any such matter. We trust the truth of our religion. Speaking as an Irish Catholic I am quite content to go even far beyond that in my desire to protect the freedom of our professors, and to give to those who may be dismissed an appeal to the Crown. It is manifest that a professor must be subject to dismissal. He may be guilty of scandalous conduct, and therefore there must be power to dismiss a professor. That power will reside in the Senate, but in order to remove all feeling of doubt I will be quite willing to agree that, as against any arbitrary exercise of that power, the professor should have an appeal as set forth in the Act to a Board of Visitors appointed by the Crown. It will satisfy the Catholics of Ireland, and by reasonable endowment and fair and generous treatment such as is recommended by the Robertson Commission, I venture to think that the right hon. Gentleman may, although his time in Ireland has been rather a stormy one, feel that he has done a great work. The right hon. Gentleman said that if he could succeed it would be an ample recompense to him for having crossed the Irish Sea. I understand that that passage is not a pleasant operation, but I ask him to be of good courage. If he succeeds in doing for Ireland in this matter what Mr. Gladstone failed to do thirty-five years ago, then his name will be honourably associated with the country. I listened with sympathy to the speech of the Leader of the Opposition, because in this matter we share one view. While the greatest interest a country has is education, by far the greatest education interest of a country is higher education. Many say that all depends on primary education. That is a false idea. The foundation of all education is higher education; the real foundation and beginning, whether it be in history or philosophy, is the higher education of the people, and that is the reason why all education in Ireland to-day is in such an unsatisfactory state. As regards the great mass of the people, they have been left without any facility for securing higher education. They are passionately devoted to it, and I assure the House that in dealing with this matter you are not dealing with the interests of the rich but with the interests of the poor If you throw open to them the door to the higher culture, they will avail themselves of it to the infinite and incalculable benefit of the nation.

Mr. MOORE (Armagh, N.) said that the speech of the Chief Secretary in introducing the Bill could scarcely have been better conceived, and certainly the measure could not have been brought forward with less offence to those who differed from the principles which it contained. In making the remarks which he should feel called upon to make he might run counter to the feelings of hon. Members below the gangway, and while he would not shrink from doing so he would try to give as little offence as the hon. Member for East Mayo had given to Unionist Members from Ulster. The Leader of the Opposition had said that the scheme sketched by the Chief Secretary was, so far as he could see, the best of all possible schemes for dealing with the problem of University education in Ireland. He concurred in that once it was admitted—and it appeared to be admitted from the speech of the hon. Member for East Mayo and from the other speeches to which they had listened—that they were going to settle the question of higher education in Ireland on grounds of denominational endowment. It was because he and his colleagues were returned from a part of the country in which feeling was very strongly against denominational endowment of any religion that they felt it their duty, now that it was made clear that the scheme involved the endowment of denominational education as a solution of the University question, to say that in accordance with their pledges to their constituents they would oppose it at every step. Every objection he took to the endowment and establishment of a denominational University from which his Roman Catholic fellow-countrymen would derive advantage applied with equal force to the proposed endowment of a Presbyterian University in Belfast, because in common fair play and justice they could not assent to that while objecting to Roman Catholics receiving an endowment. He wished to draw the attention of the House to the somewhat extraordinary history of the last twelve months which had led to the introduction of this Bill, because he wished to prove that in bringing forward this Bill the Chief Secretary had acquiesced in the demand put forward by the Roman Catholic hierarchy. He did not question their right or their conscientiousness. It was the Roman Catholic Bishops who occasioned the *impasse* and killed the usefulness of the Queen's Colleges. The Roman Catholic Bishops were the guardians of the faith and morals of their own flocks, and it was their action which had caused the difficulty for which the Chief Secretary was now proposing a solution. If the proposals were accepted by hon. Members below the gangway it was because they were satisfactory to the Roman Catholic hierarchy. The Roman Catholic hierarchy had put forward their demand before Commission after Commission, and there was very little doubt as to where the real kernel of the matter lay. They were going to have set up in Dublin denominational education which pleased the Roman Catholic hierarchy. The Protestant leaders in Belfast had never made any request for a denominational college in that city, and the gift which had been thrown at their heads was absolutely gratuitous. It was to balance the University in Dublin which was granted to comply with the Roman Catholic demand. The question of the endowment of a Presbyterian University had been brought up in the General Assembly in Belfast. That was a democratic assembly consisting of ministers and laity, and he defied anyone to say that, outside of the professional interest, the Presbyterian Church had ever put forward a claim for the endowment of a University in Belfast, and yet they were to have there a denominational University of a sort to which it was appropriate to affiliate Magee College in the city of Londonderry. It was transparent that that was a mere makeweight to give the semblance of equality and to enable the Government to satisfy the demand of the Roman Catholic bishops. He wished to call attention to the circumstances which had preceded the introduction of this Bill. There was the scheme of Mr. Bryce introduced to the public with what was really an ultimatum. The right hon. Gentleman said—

> "I can hold out no hope that any other will be proposed by the present Government. It represents our convictions."

The Chief Secretary entertained those convictions, for in April last he was asked if Mr. Bryce's scheme still held the field, and he replied that there was not a word of truth in the statement that the Government had abandoned the proposed legislation on the University question. In July he said that Mr. Bryce's scheme had achieved the satisfactory result of bringing about greater agreement and consensus of opinion in Ireland than any other scheme that had yet been produced. The present Bill was denominational from start to finish. From the moment of its inception the scheme had been brought about with the acquiescence of the Roman Catholic bishops in Ireland. Ireland, in spite of the pacific rule of the Chief Secretary, was in a very disturbed state last autumn. The right hon. Gentleman minimised the outrage in the House of Commons, although he admitted it in the country. At Southampton he spoke of the legislative benefits he had in store for Ireland (he alluded, of course, to University education), and he said publicly, and practically gave notice, that if that system of outrage were permitted to continue it would be impossible to induce the House of Commons to grant any of those legislative benefits. Almost immediately afterwards the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Tuam denounced cattle-driving as immoral and ordered it to cease; and in some dioceses in the West the same course was taken. This University Bill was part of the price, and the right hon. Gentleman was bringing it in to fulfil the promise of legislative benefits to various people for putting down cattle-driving. [AN HON. MEMBER on the MINISTERIAL Benches: What about the Leader of the Opposition?] It was true that the Leader of the Opposition had always supported a Roman Catholic University and favoured this Bill, but the right hon. Gentleman had said that his opinions on it were personal, and that other Members could vote according to their own convictions. That was what he was going to do. The arrangement between the Roman Catholic bishops and the action of the Chief Secretary in introducing the Bill were very significant facts. The probable cause was that Trinity College had been left out of the Bill.

In the Bill and the Charter it would be found that Trinity College was not mentioned. The Provost of Trinity College was an old friend of his, for he was his tutor at college; and no doubt he considered that so long as Trinity College was untouched, denominational education might be set up in Dublin. It was a regrettable thing that the force and weight of Trinity College should be used to assist what he believed to be a retrograde measure. He believed that Trinity College was short-sighted, because it was in Ireland the national University and held out inducements to men of all religious creeds. If the Bill passed, undoubtedly Presbyterian students in Ireland would go to the Presbyterian University in Belfast, and Roman Catholic students in the same way would go to the new college in Dublin. Thus Trinity College from being the national University would be degraded to a mere sectarian University. Although the students who would attend it would be fellow-members of his own Church, he maintained that it would have been to their interest to have thrown in their lot with those who objected to sectarian education rather than have submitted to a Bill the effect of which would be to turn Trinity College into a mere Church of Ireland secular training college. He regretted it, but the Chief Secretary was able to boast of the help of some of the senior fellows of Trinity College; and he had paid the price for it. The whole inducement of Mr. Bryce's Bill was that Nationalists and the Radical section of the Presbyterians would get a chance of destroying Trinity College.

MR. DILLON: So far as I am personally concerned, I have always been in favour of this scheme and opposed to the other.

MR. MOORE said he had a very keen recollection of a speech of over an hour's length delivered in the House, by the hon. Member for East Mayo, in which he used language of malevolence, or, if that was not a Parliamentary phrase, of bitter and extreme denunciation towards Trinity College. Trinity College was denounced as the narrow, bigoted, political fortress of ascendency, and no words to be found in the hon. Member's unlimited vocabulary were too bad to describe his hatred of Trinity College. Therefore, that lament over, Mr. Bryce's Bill could not have fallen on deaf ears in the Roman Catholic party, and in a section of the Radical Presbyterians in the North of Ireland. That was the genesis of the present Bill. The Chief Secretary had an interview with Cardinal Logne, at which his University proposals were discussed. Far be it from him to suggest that it was not perfectly right for the right hon. Gentleman to see Cardinal Logne, but it was perfectly evident from the date of that visit that his proposals had the sanction of the head of the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland. What had happened since? Hon. Members below the gangway had submitted to having their national aspirations deadened. They were met with unsatisfactory speeches from the Front Treasury Bench. The Chief Secretary uttered his *non possumus* and hon. Gentlemen below the gangway, knowing that the Roman Catholic bishops were waiting for this Bill, said nothing. [AN HON. MEMBER on the OPPOSITION Benches: Muzzled.] Yes; after the debate in the House they were muzzled; but while the muzzle did not prevent them from barking, it did prevent them from biting. If it had not been for the University Bill on which the Roman Catholic bishops had set their hearts, there would have been eighty-two Ishmaelites out that day on a tomahawking expedition. He did not know whether the Ishmaelites had tomahawks or not; but he might be allowed to substitute the mediæval equivalent. It was undoubted that the Roman Catholic bishops had made that demand, and the present effort of the right hon. Gentleman was to meet it. Although that had been studiously omitted from the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the previous day, nor had any hint of this proposal been given, yet it was suggested that this solution of the University problem was satisfactory to the Roman Catholic bishops, while it was said at the same time that it was not a denominational system. The two things were an impossibility. He would remind the right hon. Gentleman and the Liberal Party that they had boasted again and again in this Parliament that they were the largest Nonconformist majority in the House of Commons since the days of Cromwell. They boasted that they were the true Protestant party; but he would like to furnish them with a quotation from Mr. Gladstone, in a letter to the late Queen in 1873, on his Irish University Bill—

> "It is not in the power or will of Her Majesty's advisers to purchase Irish support by subserviency to the Irish Bishops."

That was the Gladstonian position in 1873; it was entirely different from the policy of the Radical front bench in 1908. As to the definite proposals in the Bill, the House would recollect—it had been borne in upon them by the Estimates—that there was this year an increase on the Irish expenditure already, without any question of education, of £85,000. They were told that there was no money forthcoming for land purchase in Ireland. They were told on another occasion that the land question was the biggest in Ireland. They had been told that the Treasury for Irish purposes was depleted, that there were no financial means to stop the mouths of the Irish Members. But it was now proposed to increase the financial expenditure on Ireland by £43,000 a year. Before the House agreed to burden the already over-burdened Estimates, they ought to see what sort of body it was going to pay for, and what were its principles. If on examination it was found that it was denominationalism, pure and simple, which was going to be established, they ought to reject the proposals of the Bill. The hon. Member for East Mayo took great satisfaction in looking forward to the time when the Universities in the near future would be free. He understood perfectly what the hon. Member meant by free. He meant free from outside, free from the control of the Government. At present the professors in the Queen's College were appointed by the Government, and the hon. Member looked forward to the time when those colleges would appoint and dismiss, subject to the right of appeal, their own professorial staff and conduct their own arrangements. The moment they made a college or a University free from outside control, and free from a government which cared nothing for any party, they would enable them to hang round the neck of their students the fetters of denominationalism. Opposed as he was to the endowment of any denominationalism, he would look forward with regret to a college in Belfast in which all the professors and students were Presbyterians, and where everything was to be done under a Presbyterian colour, and he would look forward with regret to the time when there would be no power of interference with them to prevent their system becoming denominational. The same remark applied with equal force to the new University in Dublin. He did not know what the safeguards would be. The safeguards to which the hon. Member for East Mayo looked forward were that there would be a majority of the laity on the governing body and no tests, and the Chief Secretary laid great stress on the terms of the Bill which provided that there should be no tests, but everybody knew that they might have a University as denominational as they chose to make it without any test at all. If he had the power to make a governing body to-morrow he could take twenty-eight clergymen of the hon. Gentleman's Church, his own Church, or the Presbyterian Church, and the result would be to make as denominational a college or University as any man could wish for, and not a word about it in the charter. But the security was supposed to be afforded by a lay majority. He did not know whether that position was ever dealt with or summed up better than by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Montrose in a debate in the year 1898. The right hon. Gentleman said—

> "The Bishops as I understand, agree that there is to be a preponderance of laymen on the governing body, but they are to be of the Roman Catholic faith."

That would be the governing body under the Chief Secretary's proposals. It was not suggested that there was to be allowed a Protestant majority in the new college at Dublin, or a Presbyterian majority in the new University at Belfast.

MR. BIRRELL said he controlled the body for the first five years.

MR. MOORE said that during the first five years students would come in under the auspices of the first people, and it was during the first five years that the people come in who were to elect their successors. Was there any doubt what the result would be in a University established on those lines? The Secretary of India went on to say—

> "I confess I am not satisfied that this preponderance of laymen over ecclesiastics would be a very solid guarantee, because in more churches than the Roman Catholic there is a species of persons known as 'the clerically-minded layman,' so I am not satisfied that a provision for the preponderance of laymen would be any adequate guarantee."

He thought the right hon. Gentleman was perfectly right, and from start to finish he had never heard from the Chief Secretary, or the hon. Member for East Mayo, anything which would prevent these colleges becoming denominational in every sense of the word.

MR. DILLON inquired whether it would not be perfectly fair to the Secretary for India if the hon. Gentleman would go on and read that he said he would accept this proposal as a guarantee because it was a self-governing body?

MR. MOORE said he had not seen that, but if the hon. Member said it was so he would accept his statement. The Chief Secretary was setting up a college or University for Roman Catholics, and he had taken advantage of a play upon words to say that it was not a Roman Catholic University. If it was a Roman Catholic University, as soon as that appeared to hon. Gentlemen opposite their pledges would compel them to vote against it. Here was a college, of which the governing body and the students were all Roman Catholics, and they had power to elect. Was there any doubt that it would become a Roman Catholic University? That question was never dealt with better than by a distinguished jurist who had been quoted with approval by the Chief Secretary and complimented by the hon. Member for East Mayo. That was Lord Robertson, who said—

> "Our Report makes it clear that a college for Roman Catholics or a University for Roman Catholics must be a Roman Catholic institution, with limitations of thought corresponding to the requirements of the authoritative exponents of that creed."

In this House the very first time the President of the Board of Trade differed from hon. Members below the gangway was on the University question, and he tore to shreds the pretence that a University for Roman Catholics was not a Roman Catholic University. He said that he thought it was possible to overcome certain difficulties in the way of education in Ireland without setting up a Catholic University. There ought not to be any difficulty at all in setting up a University into which the poor boy could enter, and in which the Roman Catholic creed could be put on an equality with every other creed, but the right hon Gentleman said there must be something more than that behind the demands of Irish Members, and that the real object must be to set up a University, Catholic in tone, Catholic in atmosphere, in a word, a Catholic University. The President of the Board of Trade could not make any distinction between that and a Roman Catholic University, and said that the Nonconformists would oppose the constitution of such an institution, no matter from what side of the House it came. Those were the opinions of the President of the Board of Trade in 1898, and it would be a matter of interest to the House before the Bill reached its final stage to see if the right hon. Gentleman was now prepared, as the Chief Secretary was, to distinguish between a University for Roman Catholics and a Roman Catholic University. He had described the Bill as produced in reply to the demands of the Roman Catholic Bishops, and he would very briefly summarise to the House what those demands were. In 1864 Pope Pius the Ninth issued to the World his "Syllabus of Errors," and he started in the first place with, as the primary error, educaton not subject to clerical control. Again and again, moreover, the Roman Catholic Church had denounced mixed education grants. In 1871 the Bishops passed a series of Resolutions, one of which ran—

> "In union with the Holy See and the Bishops of the Catholic world, we again renew our oft-repeated condemnation of mixed education as intrinsically and grievously dangerous to faith and morals, and tending to perpetuate dissensions, insubordination, and disaffection in this country."

From that date to this there had never been any question on the part of the Roman Catholic bishops about mixed education. In another document under their hand they repudiated again the error condemned by Pope Pius IX., and said that education must to some extent be under clerical supervision or control. They had always set their faces against mixed education even in regard to the technical instruction given under the Department of Agriculture. There had in those cases been protests against young people of different churches being allowed to meet at certain training colleges. He was not complaining of that, they had a right to enforce it if they did not like it, but if they did, let it not be said that it was not denominational education. It seemed to him that that was the whole subject with which the Bill was dealing, viz., the setting up of denominational education in Ireland. He and his friends considered that such a proposal was retrograde. Trinity College, Dublin, had been struggling to, and had thrown off its whole tendency to be denominational. On the Continent they could see the same thing taking place in Spain, and in Bavaria. The whole tendency of any University now was to shake off the shackles of any Church. As would be seen from the correspondence in *The Times*, the struggle was going on. If one of the professors taught Modernism where there was a representative of the Pope in the country to which the University belonged, his dismissal was called for. As soon as ever a man raised his voice against the Papal Encyclical and in favour of Modernism, there was a conflict as to the right of free teaching. The same consideration did not arise so often in the Presbyterian Church, but there would be at any rate a source of friction. It was a retrograde step; the Government were going to set up under a teaching University in Dublin the same shackles which, in this country, we were endeavouring to get rid of year after year. They in Ireland objected very much to this process of segregation. They thought it was an infinite pity that the Roman Catholic Church and the Roman Catholic bishops kept their people away from the Protestants as if they were heretics and there was some contagion about them. It was an unfortunate thing and did not make for better feeling in Ireland. In Belfast they had a beautiful hospital to which everybody might go, but the Roman Catholics insisted upon having a hospital for themselves, and when that sort of thing was carried to the length of having separate graveyards it was no part of the duty of the British Government to endow separate universities for separate creeds. He and his friends were accustomed to be reproached with bigotry, and they were treated as if they were discussing the penal laws, which were not now in force, and objecting to their repeal. They had no objections to the Roman Catholics opening a University if they wanted one, but why should Protestants be taxed to set up a Catholic University, when this country said that all religions should be equal before the law? All the temporal possessions of the Irish Church had been taken from her, and from the moment they were taken, it was said that in Ireland there was to be absolute equality between all the religions. This proposal to endow the Presbyterian Church which had not asked for it with a University in Belfast, and the Roman Catholic Church which had asked for it over and over again with its own University in Dublin, was an absolutely retrograde policy. He would give one more quotation from a man who was a strong Presbyterian and had been president of this Presbyterian body and a strong supporter of Mr. Bryce's Bill. That gentleman said—

> "In conclusion he hoped they would treat the new scheme of three universities that were bound to be sectarian less or more with the most uncompromising hostility. They should resist to the uttermost the notion of dividing the youth of the country in their best and most generous days of life into three hostile camps, since they were already divided enough. There was no squaring of the Presbyterian Church. There was no 'deal.' The Presbyterian forms of procedure did not admit of such a thing. They were a free and open court. Their resolutions were in favour of the establishment of one University, with constituent colleges on an unsectarian basis."

On the face of it, it became more and more evident that the real object of this Bill was not to establish equality between religious denominations in Ireland but to meet the demand of the

Roman Catholic bishops. Ulster Members were frequently told that they were narrow-minded and met all these proposals with a direct negative. He believed there had been a great change of opinion in Ireland, and that it was not in the direction wished by hon. Gentlemen below the gangway. The people were beginning to ask themselves why, when there was a splendid University in Dublin, to whom everybody might go, and Queen's Colleges at Belfast and Cork, the privilege of going to these places was not permitted, as a matter of Church policy, by the Roman Catholic bishops. It was a hard thing to say, and he spoke in all sincerity when he said that he did not like to say hard things, but he believed that if the House put its foot down and said that denominational endowment in Ireland was a retrograde policy, and that they would have no part or share in it, the Roman Catholic bishops would recognise the inevitable and no longer withold from their people the education which was waiting for them there, as it was at Oxford and Cambridge.

*Mr. BUTCHER (Cambridge University) said that the speech of the Chief Secretary in introducing this Bill was a model of lucid exposition; but to his mind it was much more, and he desired to join with the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition in congratulating the Chief Secretary on having, as he believed, found a solution of this question which would commend itself to the enlightened judgment of almost everybody, both in this country and in Ireland. No one would suspect him of any undue friendliness to the Chief Secretary on the side of Irish administration and policy, but his feeling on this question was above all political interests. He believed the right hon. Gentleman had found a way out of a difficulty which had perplexed successive Chief Secretaries. He himself perhaps knew as much as any Member of the House of the complexity of the problem. He had sat on two Commissions and had listened to evidence which had filled four or five volumes of Blue-books, and he ventured to say that the Chief Secretary had brought to bear on a baffling difficulty a candour and impartiality and statesmanship which would make his tenure of office memorable. Few persons would dispute that the equity of the Roman Catholic demand had been proved. No less than five Chief Secretaries since 1886 had admitted it. Since 1901 two Royal Commissions, on which sat men representatives of all our Universities and all the churches in the Kingdom had declared with hardly a dissentient voice that the Roman Catholic demand was a just demand and ought to be met. Nor could the urgency of the demand be denied. It was no exaggeration to say that University education was worse off in Ireland to-day than it was thirty years ago. At that time a criminal blunder was made in the dissolution of the Queen's University and the substitution for it of the Royal University, which, whatever its merits, was educationally indefensible. During the last five years opinion in Ireland had been gradually maturing towards a solution of this kind, and he believed they had now arrived well-nigh at unanimity regarding the main lines of a University scheme. There were some who still said, Why should not Roman Catholics go to Trinity College? He was content with the answer that experience proved that they would not go there. He agreed with what Mr. Gladstone said in 1873, that it was not our business to inquire whether the Roman Catholics were right or wrong; the question for us was—supposing they were wrong in their view, was it right for us to exclude them from University training and culture? Personally, he rejected the idea that any man should be excluded from the privileges of higher education for conscience sake.

There were two cardinal conditions without which no scheme of University education for Roman Catholics could be successful. The first was that the plan proposed should meet with the approval of those in whose interests it was proposed. It was not enough to say: "Ask and ye shall receive,"—the direct opposite of that which was asked for. The long list of misunderstandings and failures—as in 1868, 1873, 1878—stood before them as a warning. The gift was all but given and then withdrawn or given in a form which nobody desired. The first condition, therefore, was that the solution proposed must satisfy national sentiment. The second condition was that it must on the academic side satisfy instructed academic opinion. It was not worth the time and labour of the House, or worthy of its dignity, to set up institutions which had no promise of an intellectual future, no hope of promoting education or advancing learning. The reason he was able to support the Bill was that he believed the institutions which it proposed to found would foster all the elements of intellectual life in Ireland, that they might in time become great seats of learning, and even rival that one noble University which Ireland now possessed.

Coming to the Bill itself and the proposals which had been sketched out, he would first refer to Belfast. He had listened with astonishment to the description just given of the Belfast University as a Presbyterian University, a body in its essence denominational. It might as well be suggested that the Universities of Scotland were denominational because the majority of the students were Presbyterians. As to Edinburgh University he had lived there a good many years, but it had never occurred to him that the place was denominational. It was true there was a sort of negative test—he forgot the exact words—which came upon him by surprise when he was called upon to sign it. Its effect was that he would not in his teaching do anything to upset the Westminster Confession of Faith. As Plato, Arstotle, and Sophocles did not know the Westminster Confession of Faith, he felt that without seriously embarrassing his conscience he might sign that test. But there was to be no kind of test in the University of Belfast. He welcomed the fact that the College was now prepared to accept University responsibilities. It had prospered under adverse conditions; it had survived the crippling blow dealt it in the destruction of the Queen's University. In recent years it had received liberal benefactions. He felt confident that civic generosity would be still further elicited when it had gained University *status*; that the new institution would be an intellectual stimulus to the whole district around; and that, as in Manchester, Liverpool and Birmingham the citizens were proud of their City University, so in a very few years to come Belfast would rejoice over its University as much as over its shipbuilding. Next he turned to the federal University with its seat at Dublin, the other constituent colleges being Cork and Galway. Other federal Universities had been proposed at different times. The federal University of Mr. Bryce was to include five colleges, one of which was to be Trinity College. Now a federal University was a delicate bit of mechanism, and the fatal objection to the Bryce scheme was that every point of contact would have been one of friction, for it brought unwilling yoke-fellows into partnership with the probability of early disruption. Another previous scheme of federal University was that contemplated by the Robertson Commission. In that there were to be four constituent colleges, including Belfast. The scheme now before them embracing only three constituent colleges had this advantage over all the others, that it was more homogeneous; there was in it no distinct cleavage in academic policy or religious principles. Of course, it would have a Catholic atmosphere; otherwise it would not satisfy those for whom it was intended. But let the broad fact be noted, that there were to be no tests either for students or professors; no student was to be debarred from competing for his religious belief; and there was to be no endowment out of public funds of any theological chair. That met many people's objections; but there was a further point. Consider the constitution of the governing body. There was a time when the Bishops insisted on controlling a Catholic University by their representatives as the governing body. In 1897 they modified that claim, and they said they would accept a majority of laymen. In 1902, in evidence before the Robertson Commission they demanded two *ex officio* representatives on the Catholic College in Dublin. To-day, if he understood aright, they had entirely withdrawn their claim for *ex officio* representation, for the governing body, he understood, was to be as free from tests as were the students. That was not all. The academic freedom of the governing body rested not merely or chiefly upon the absence of tests, but upon another question—how were the vacancies in that body to be filled up? He was glad to hear from the Chief Secretary that as regards its permanent constitution the majority would consist of academically elected members. Out of thirty-five members seventeen were to be representatives of the constituent colleges, and five were to represent the graduates. The atmosphere, therefore, would be determined mainly by the character of the teachers and the graduates—the right way of determining the atmosphere. They would give the colour and tone to University policy; there was to be no external power exercising controlling authority.

He had said that a federal University was a delicate mechanism; and there were two main conditions of harmonious work; which he desired to emphasise. One was that the representation of the constituent colleges on the governing body should be a fair one, in particular that a just balance should be maintained between the claims of Dublin and Cork. The college in Dublin would, of course, be the metropolitan college of the University, and it ought to be national and not provincial, large, well-endowed, and on a scale sufficient to strike the imagination. In the words of the Robertson Commission—

> "Unless what is done is done on an adequate and impressive scale, it need not be done at all. It is necessary that in the dignity of the buildings, the emoluments of the teachers and the equipment of the establishment, the institution should command respect and inspire enthusiasm."

But subject to this condition, he would urge on the House that the claim of Cork for a place of due importance in the University system should be fully considered. The other condition of success was this—the Chief Secretary had alluded to it as one of the problems of the case—that there must be the largest measure of college autonomy that was consistent with the maintenance of a high academic standard. The detailed suggestions for effecting that end, contained in the Report of the Robertson Commission were, he thought, compatible with what had been said by the Chief Secretary that afternoon. He would mention two points. One concerned the appointment of professors in the constituent colleges. Each college must have, he did not say a final voice, but an effective voice in the selection of its own professors. Secondly, the colleges should be free, subject to the approval of the University Senate, to lay down their own courses of study and to carry on their own examinations. It was right as proposed by the Chief Secretary, that there should be an outside examiner, who had a power of veto. But one of the weaknesses of most federal Universities was that the teaching body was more or less dissociated from the examining body; and the corrective now suggested was that the teachers should themselves be *ex officio* examiners, their results being revised by an external and impartial authority. He noted in passing with great satisfaction the proposal that the governing bodies of the Queen's Colleges at Cork and Galway should be so remodelled as to bring into closer contact with the districts from which they drew their students.

He now passed to the only two features of the scheme which caused him some misgiving. Both were connected with the question of affiliation. The first was that the Senate of the University was empowered to affiliate various colleges or other institutions. Now there were in Ireland a number of colleges, secondary schools, and diocesan seminaries which imagined themselves to be up to an academic standard, partly because they had sent up successful students to the examinations of the Royal University. Steady pressure would be brought to bear on the Senate to affiliate such institutions. If the Senate acted laxly and yielded, they would have all the evils of the Royal University over again. Young men cramming in their schools and seminaries, never studying in an academic centre, never coming under the liberalising influence of meeting fellow-students in a larger atmosphere, would merely carry on the present educational tradition. That would be the ruin of the scheme. The only answer under the Bill as it stood would be that there was no danger of the Senate doing anything so foolish. But one knew what ecclesiastical pressure was in Ireland in educational matters, and he regretted that such a responsibility should be laid on the Senate. Rather let the Bill itself specify the institutions to be affiliated. The affiliation question, however, became much more serious in dealing with the two theological seminaries, Magee and Maynooth Colleges. It offended against all academical principles to allow residence at a theological seminary to count as residence at a University for the purposes of an Arts degree. He knew of no instance in which that was permitted in any other country. Maynooth was a great and organised institution, one of the most powerful in Ireland, and the affiliated college would in this case be more powerful than the college to which it was affiliated. In time it might dominate the whole University system. Dr. O'Dwyer, the Bishop of Limerick, gave evidence on this question before the Robertson Commission. He laid stress on the necessity of having an educated clergy, and on the gain that would result if clergy and laity became friends at college and attended the same lectures. He held out the hope that some 200 students, candidates for the priesthood, would come from Maynooth every year to study at the Catholic College in Dublin. But this idea was disclaimed by other witnesses who spoke for the hierarchy and in the end the prospect held out was merely that a handful of Honour Students and a few priests after passing through Maynooth might come up to Dublin to attend advanced courses in certain subjects. The suggestion might, however, still be made with all deference to the Roman Catholic prelates that Maynooth would withdraw the claim of being affiliated for Arts purposes to the Dublin College, and allow the ecclesiastical students to take their Arts course in Dublin in a residential hostel, under proper supervision, moral and religious. Having thus graduated in Arts they would pursue their theological studies at Maynooth. The whole affiliation question was one of grave importance and was likely to prove the chief flaw in the Bill.

But apart from this objection there was in some minds a fear that the new University would augment the power of the priesthood. For himself, he had no desire to increase priestly power either in this country or in Ireland; but he would put it to the House, was it likely that the giving of higher education to Roman Catholics would aggravate the evil of priestly influence, if evil it was? He had so much belief in the value of learning, that he was confident that the more young men learned the less likely were they to come under any influence, priestly or otherwise, which would shut their minds upon intellectual truth. The safeguard lay not only in the reading of books and in attendance on lectures, but still more in such discussion and criticism as led to the enlargement and emancipation of the mind. The University question was not, as some thought, a bishop's question, but a layman's question. Nor was it the layman only of the upper class whom it concerned. Nothing had interested him more in recent years than to find that wherever he went, even in remote parts of Ireland, he came upon farmers, who might be supposed never to have heard of a University, who discussed the University question. Farmers, tradesmen, members of county councils,—many of them had power, they knew it; they had not knowledge—they were beginning to know that too; but they desired it for their sons. They had heard, moreover, of the younger and democratic Universities that had sprung up in England. They had discovered that there was a new alliance between industrial and University life, and that science was being applied to every department of social and economic activity. Their ambitions were stirred; they desired to share in that intellectual movement. Cork, prosperous and thriving, with a population remarkable for its energy and independence of mind already aspired to be a University city. The interest the question aroused had been shown by a thing unique in Ireland, namely, the magnificent offer made by the hon. Member for Cork to give his whole fortune to that College if it were put on a new basis either as a well-endowed University College or as a separate University. Cork desired to have its own University, but was content for the present with a College united to the University by a federal bond under conditions which ensured the needful freedom and elasticity. He appealed to the House no longer to allow the greatest of Irish treasures to go to waste

—the intellectual wealth and the love of learning long dormant or suppressed. Again and again high hopes had been formed, only to be dashed to the ground. This time, he thought, those hopes were destined to be fulfilled. Hon. Members would remember the words of the Great Charter: "To no man will we deny or delay justice." In this matter justice had been delayed, but justice would no longer be denied. He felt specially grateful to his political opponents for the magnanimous kindness by which they had thought him worthy of proposing his name for the first Senate. He would do all in his power to help to make the scheme a success. He thought the Bill now before them gave promise of a just settlement and he trusted it would have a speedy and prosperous passage through the House.

*MR. MASSIE (Wiltshire, Cricklade) said that whatever might be his personal attitude towards this Bill in regard to its details and probable working his attitude would never be the same as that which had been adopted by the hon. Member for North Armagh. He echoed the words of the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition that this measure was a sincere attempt to solve a very complex problem. To a great extent he appreciated the difficulties which the Chief Secretary for Ireland had had to face in the course of his very necessary and important task, and if anyone could conciliate opposition it was the right hon. Gentleman. If the Chief Secretary could not command success in this matter he at least deserved it. Complete success was indeed a thing incredible. He fully recognised the success with which the right hon. Gentleman had been able to cope with many difficulties, and he was very glad to notice in connection with the Bill how the episcopate had modified its demands. The University was to be a real one, it was to be an abode of learning from which no Irishman or any other man was to be debarred by his religious views from being a student or a professor, or in due time a member of the governing body. He did not call that a denominational atmosphere, on paper at any rate. When the crutches which at first would be used to set the University on its legs were removed, he understood that this University was to be self-governing, democratically governed by graduates without any serious interference by a co-optative or nominated element, whether spiritual or temporal. What then was further needed to bring up a University in the way it should go? Nothing, except one thing, and that was that they should make sure that this paper constitution would be a reality. If the Irish people were determined to have it so then it would be so. If the University was to be a genuine on, then its professors must be free to teach that which was in them. There must be no dismissal of a professor of biology because he believed in evolution and told his class so. There must be no dismissal of a professor of philosophy because he did not bow the knee to St. Thomas Aquinas. It was the pride of Oxford and Cambridge, of Paris, of Jena, Tübingen and Berlin, of Harvard and of Yale that their professors were free men, and every University founded in modern times must be on those lines, or the modern spirit would be found like one walking about in waste places seeking rest and finding none. If this University was developed in the manner described in the Bill it would be in the end a home of academic freedom and companionship of men of different faiths, and that University would be the pride of Ireland. He regretted that the hope of those patriots of the Young Ireland Party of two generations ago was now fading away. They looked for one great National University in which all the sons of Ireland could associate freely together, and in their impressionable years learn how to differ wthout hostility, and how to soften the asperities of Catholic and Protestant, of Nationalist and Orangeman. The legislators who founded the Queen's Colleges desired to look upon a home of harmony, equality and brotherhood, but they had hoped in vain. This Bill in that respect seemed to him to be a signal of despair. There was not going to be one great national University but three Universities, one practically Protestant, another practically Presbyterian, and a third practically Roman Catholic. The Roman Catholics, with their bishops, would have it so, the Presbyterians, or rather a section of the

Presbyterians—and he was not certain that he could not more truly say an individual section—were content that it should be so—[Cries of "No"]—and Trinity College, Dublin, had secured that it should be so. Their opposition had been transformed to agreement and even to support. That was the price they paid for "hands off Trinity." If that was the case it would be so to the regret of those whom he ventured to call true Unionists, who desired a University, even as Young Ireland had desired one, where men of all faiths freely mingled together. He was not sure that Trinity College, Dublin, would not live to repent it, because it was now standing aloof from the great stream of national life, and its lot might yet be that of the pool which was proud to stand still while the great river rushed by. Even statesmen might yet repent this action and look back and wish that those who had so rashly divided the educational life of Ireland were not met with more firmness, more patience and more strict justice, instead of being allowed rather too easily to get their way. He still had one hope and to that he clung. His hope rested in the people of Ireland themselves. He looked forward to the time when the Irish people would take their educational salvation into their own hands and brush aside all injurious interference, whether spiritual or temporal, and take care that those who had to shape the destinies of the University which this Bill proposed ,should make that institution a University worth of the name, national, broad, comprehensive and free.

MR. WILLIAM O'BRIEN (Cork) said that they were mindful of the difficulties of this great question. He desired at once to join his colleagues in wishing god-speed to the Bill. It was a happy augury to find the Leader of the Opposition and the Member for Cambridge University concurring with a Liberal Minister in putting their shoulders to the wheel for the settlement of this seemingly inextricable problem. Without some such spirit of magnaminity and of mutal compromise between Irishmen and between Englishmen as well, some of them recognised that it was not possible to solve this question nor indeed any other great Irish question. None of them on those benches would be grudging in their acknowledgment of the spirit of generosity which the Leader of the Opposition and the hon. Member for Cambridge University had shown, and which alone made it possible for the right hon. Gentleman to introduce this Bill, and not only introduce it, but pass it before the end of the session. The Bill was really a Bill for the emancipation of the people of Ireland from intellectual penal laws almost as humiliating and as destructive of any higher life in the country as the more brutal penal laws in other matters. As to the speech of the hon. Member for North Armagh, he had not left them in any doubt that they were still threatened with opposition of a somewhat forlorn character, and opposition on which he was afraid any argument of generosity, or indeed any other argument would be thrown away. But when they had men of the intellectual calibre and of the standing in public life of the Leader of the Opposition and the Member for Cambridge University, generously acknowledging that under the existing state of the law Ireland was crippled and sterilised in the matter of higher education, and throwing themselves into the breach to enable even a Liberal Minister to provide a remedy, he did not think the Chief Secretary need be greatly daunted by an opposition which still, he was sorry to say, was of the kind of the old ascendancy, but which was not perhaps nowadays particularly distinguished for brilliancy or daring. He hoped the hon. Member for North Armagh would not take it as a personal offence if he suggested that, whatever other feeling they might inspire among a dwindling band of their fellow countrymen in Ireland, the last feeling they were likely to inspire was that the Nationalists had any dread of them. They and their ascendency were things of the past. The Government had obeyed for good or ill the warning "hands off Trinity" and, he thought, he and his friends had some right to retort upon these gentlemen, "hands off Ireland." He hoped that hon. Members on the Liberal side of the House, who might think it necessary to oppose the Bill, would think a great many times before they said or did anything to complicate differences. He hoped he might respectfully appeal to them to let Irishmen settle this question among themselves, and to remember that this Bill involved no wrong and no disability upon any human being of any class or party in Ireland. It simply enabled three-fourths of the population of Ireland to enjoy the blessings of higher education from which, under existing circumstances, they were debarred. They did not for an instant pretend to infringe the religious liberties of any other persons. They simply asked to be allowed to enjoy those liberties themselves in the only way in which they could conscientiously do so. He would ask hon. Members representing English constituencies to remember that there were matters on which they must agree to differ, and on which they must be prepared to allow that Catholics were perhaps the best judges of what it was permissible for them to do in the domain of conscience, and to trust the Catholic young laymen of Ireland to take care of the intellectual liberties of their Protestant fellow-countrymen if they should ever be attacked. So much for the sympathy with which they regarded the right hon. Gentleman's entrance on the path which he had chosen. He had been met with a great many intimidatory remarks by the hon. Member for North Armagh. He did not for a moment pretend that this was an ideal settlement. Was there ever an ideal settlement, or was there ever likely to be an ideal settlement as the result of their human struggles? Although those who represented Cork had to speak with certain amount of reserve, they all recognised, in the words of the Leader of the Opposition, that this was a sincere and courageous effort capable of yielding incalculable blessing to the future higher education of Ireland, and certainly it would be no fault of theirs if this great measure of intellectual emancipation was lost to the youth of Ireland. He was startled at the ingenuity of the hon. and learned Member for North Armagh in discovering a grievance in the new Belfast University. He only wished that they had been made to suffer from the same grievance in Cork, for certainly their patience had been tested in a somewhat severe way. Up to recently Belfast had not shown any opposition of the kind which the hon. and learned Gentleman had expressed. The proposal was a handsome piece of good fortune for Belfast, but the hon. Member condoled with the unfortunate people of the North of Ireland that the gift had been almost pressed upon them. It was one of the little ironies in the government of Ireland that Belfast should get a University it did not seek, while the University which Cork most earnestly asked had been refused. He did not complain, and the people did not complain. They recognised that it was no fault of the Chief Secretary for Ireland. They did not grudge the people of Belfast what they regarded as a very valuable charter, and they did not grudge the very substantial increase which had been made to their endowments, although Belfast was, from its wealth, better able to supplement State endowments than other parts of the country. Still less did they grudge or demur in the slightest degree, except as to its smallness, the provision made for the new University in Dublin and the University College with which it would be so closely identified. They recognised in the fullest manner that Dublin was the centre and reservoir to which the youth from the southern provinces would naturally go, and that it was entitled to such endowment and equipment as would enable her worthily to fulfil the function of building up what was required in the way of higher education for three-quarters of the young men in Ireland. Although in Cork they would be undoubtedly heavily handicapped in the race, they hoped they would be able to start under conditions which would give promise of success. For the people of the poorer classes in Munster, with whom he and his friends were principally concerned, a residence in Dublin, or higher teaching in Dublin, was out of the question, but it was not a bad sign of the intellectual alertness of the people of the South that they had declared themselves ready to tax themselves out of their own pockets in order to have a University of their own. They were ready to make a start at this great disadvantage provided they were not forced to start under conditions which would place Cork in the position of being completely overshadowed by the more wealthy institutions of the North.

While they heartily accepted this provisional arrangement they hoped that by-and-by, when Cork would have won its spurs, and had shown its metal, such a charter of autonomy as they now started with would be enlarged by the natural process of affiliation by which constituent colleges in the north of England had evolved into Universities. He wished to say that, without fuller consideration of the right hon. Gentleman's proposals, he did not like to come to any final decision on the subject. So far as he could judge, the proposals of the Chief Secretary to give them a fair start very much depended upon the first Senate, but there was no concealing from the House and from themselves their apprehension that Cork would be left at a very grievous disadvantage in that respect. The Member for Cambridge University had said that the Cork Medical School—the Cork College—was on a level with the Dublin School of Medicine, and that it would be to a great extent crowded out by Dublin under the present proposal. He was glad to hear the Chief Secretary say that on all these questions his mind was open, and that there would be plenty of opportunity, hereafter, for discussing them in a friendly way. As to matters of income and the local governing powers that were proposed to be conferred upon Cork College, he wished to say a word. He quite shared the protest of the hon. Member for East Mayo as to the monetary provision for the Dublin University, but he must candidly admit that as to the other provisions allocated to the Cork College, it did not seem to him a serious grievance even against the English Treasury. As to the local governing powers that were proposed to be conferred upon them, he hoped that they might work out practically in a system that would make the efficiency of the Cork students tested by their own professors instead of by strange professors which sometimes put students to a very serious disadvantage, although, to use a phrase employed in the fiscal controversy, they would have the advantage of a preferential tariff. Without that much of autonomy, it would be better to put Cork out of pain at once. On this subject he associated himself wholly with the view of the Member for Cambridge University, and on the part of the people of the South of Ireland he thanked him most cordially for his most powerful support. He accepted his position that in the first place they ought to have the right of shaping their own course of studies in those special matters, such as the higher agricultural education, brewing, chemistry, schools of journalism, music, and teaching generally of the higher stamp, in which they could find careers suitable for their own young people. They must also have what the hon. Member for Cambridge University called an effective voice in the appointment of their own professors, and they must have it made clear that their own students would be examined at their own University centre by their own professors, subject, of course, to the appointment of an external examiner for the purpose of maintaining the standard of efficiency, so long as there was an interchange of external examiners all round. If they only got, as he was satisfied the Chief Secretary intended they should get, a fair initial start upon this basis they would not be afraid to face the music and to take their chance. They had sufficient confidence in the capacity and enthusiasm for learning of their young people, and he had sufficient confidence in the man who was at the head of the institution in Cork. They were quite willing to take their chance with the future. With this very modest measure of justice for their side they were most ready to join in obtaining the fullest possible measure of endowing scientific equipment, and of teaching power for Catholics and Protestants in Galway or Cork, or in Dublin or Belfast. They would enter into competition with them without the smallest tinge of professional or sectarian jealousy. On the contrary, the more highly Ireland was educated, the better it would be for toleration and liberality of mind all round, for all religions and for higher education. He begged to congratulate the right hon. Gentleman on the speech he had made, and he hoped he would not think it presumptuous if he ventured to press upon him, having regard to the reception the Bill had had, even with the many

English Bills in the way, he should take a firm stand to secure immediate facilities for the passage of the Bill into law in the present session.

Mr. WYNDHAM (Dover): As one who has long wished to see some practical solution of this question of University education for Ireland, I wish to congratulate the right hon. Gentleman on the bold use he has made of a fair opportunity. I am persuaded that those who see the difficulties of this question, and they are great, will not get a return for the money justly devoted for those other reforms in Ireland unless Ireland has a proper system of education. All the credit and cash which have been devoted to land purchase and the establishment of new departments, to the many other projects which have been contemplated in the past or which may be undertaken in the future, will fail of their effect unless Ireland has an effective educational system, and University education is by far the most important part of it. It is not the roof to complete an edifice, but the foundation and source from which all fructification follows. On these grounds and claims I welcome this Bill. But I welcome it also as a Unionist, because that will enable enable us to urge, as we have urged over and over again in the past, that this Parliament is willing to undertake any services for Ireland which any Parliament sitting in Dublin would be willing to do. I welcome this Bill because it will prevent that strong disparity between the existing opportunities for higher education in this country and those in Ireland —a disparity which must always be a source of deep concern to Unionists. I welcome this Bill because it is a conservative measure, and preserves existing institutions. I welcome it because it is an Imperialist measure (and I wish to see Ireland an integral part of the United Kingdom and of the Empire) and because it will enable Ireland to take her place side by side with Great Britain in competition with other countries in science, art, invention, and commerce. Of course there are difficulties, but to those who think them formidable, I would point out that at this moment we devote a great deal of money in respect to primary education in Ireland which has a distinctly denominational character. There is the College of Maynooth with absolutely denominational teaching and clerical government. Those who fear the domination of the priesthood should be glad that there are to be other institutions in Ireland which have a denominational atmosphere and not a clerical control. It may be said that Trinity College and the old Queen's Colleges are open. So they are, but many Irishmen either will not, cannot, or at any rate do not send their sons to these institutions; and it is clear that some institutions must be opened to which they can send their sons. On these historical grounds of a political character and on modern grounds of a practical character I welcome this Bill. We know that Irishmen lost much of their property in the soil of Ireland by political views and that by fiscal views their commerce was destroyed, although the Party which which I am connected hope at some time to remedy the latter as it has done the first. I believe, however, that neither land purchase nor fiscal reform will avail unless an opportunity is afforded for the restoration of a University education to the youth of Ireland. On all these grounds I congratulate the right hon. Gentleman on the attempt that he has made to secure that.

Mr. CHARLES CRAIG (Antrim, S.) said that before the vote was taken he wished to put before the House the views which he and his colleagues from Ulster held on this question. He must admit, however, that that might seem a work of supererogation because those views had been placed before the House by his friends in a manner which he could not for a moment hope to attain. He was convinced that the House would agree that the view they had always taken had been put forward in the most admirable and moderate way by those sitting on that side of the House. The solution of this question rested primarily with the followers of the right hon. Gentleman and chiefly with the Nonconformists opposite. He desired to ask those Nonconformists whether they considered that if this Bill passed, the higher education proposed to be set up by it would not be higher education of a sectarian character. The right hon.

Gentleman had carefully avoided that question, but it was the crux of the whole matter. Was the higher education to be afforded by the Chief Secretary for Ireland to be denominational or not? If there could have been any doubts while the right hon. Gentleman was speaking those doubts were set aside when they heard the speeches of hon. Gentlemen below the gangway, because they made no secret of the fact that this was an attempt to satisfy the Roman Catholic portion of the population of Ireland on the question of Irish education. They had admitted frankly that it was a University for Roman Catholics. If that was so, and he did not think the Chief Secretary would deny that that was the whole object of the Bill, he would like to know from hon. Members on the other side of the House, especially from the Nonconformists, how, in the face of their opposition to denominational education in this country in the past, they could bring themselves to vote for this Bill. He asked hon. Members on all sides of the House to believe that they opposed this Bill from perfectly pure motives and with absolute sincerity. They believed that in setting up a University to which Roman Catholics alone could go, the Government were perpetuating or tending to perpetuate a system under which they would separate the different religious bodies in Ireland into separate watertight compartments, and everybody admitted that that was not a policy likely to conduce to the welfare of Ireland. He had not heard any argument put forward in favour of this Bill, but only the extenuation that the Roman Catholics of Ireland had made up their minds that they could not use any existing University, and that being so it was the duty of the State to provide them with a University of which they could make use. If the mere holding out, on the part of the Roman Catholics, for a University of their own was to be a good reason for granting it he asked why did not they grant this University forty years ago. They had held out for fifty years, and he saw no change in the facts to-day as compared with fifty years ago. If it was wrong to give this education then it was wrong to give it to-day. In this country the Roman Catholic was perfectly free to go to any University he liked: why should it be wrong for him to do so in Ireland? He could not see why a totally different and a reactionary principle should be applied to Ireland than was applied to every other country in the world. They all knew the history of Roman Catholic Universities in other countries. Every one that had existed had sooner or later been suppressed and put down by Roman Catholics themselves. But now they were asked in the twentieth century to establish in Ireland a state of affairs which, having been founded in other countries two centuries ago, had been given up fifty or sixty years ago. Nobody, he thought, could deny that this proposal of the right hon. Gentleman was a retrograde and harmful step. Some reference had been made to the action of the Presbyterians in Belfast in accepting the offer or bribe of £60,000 or £70,000 in order to convert the Queen's College of that city into a University, but he would like the House to understand that the general body of Presbyterians in the North of Ireland were not in favour of that movement, not because Belfast was not large enough to support a University of its own, but on the grounds he had indicated. The Queen's College there was already partly stereotyped as a Presbyterian institution, but under the proposals of the right hon. Gentleman it would become absolutely stereotyped.

MR. BIRRELL: Why?

MR. CHARLES CRAIG replied that its whole staff would be Presbyterian from the head downwards. It would become stereotyped for precisely the same reason that the University they proposed to set up in Dublin would be a Roman Catholic University. The right hon. Gentleman had talked about the great enthusiasm which prevailed, but there was none except in the immediate entourage of the Queen's College itself. The other inhabitants did not want it, because they recognised that in creating a University and making it a sectarian place of education they would deprive themselves to a large extent of the argument they had always used against denominational education all over the country. His colleagues and he intended, although he understood it was a somewhat unusual course, to divide against the introduction of the Bill for the purpose of entering at the very earliest opportunity their most emphatic protest against setting up an institution in Ireland which they firmly believed was retrograde and could not possibly act beneficially towards Ireland as a whole.

Sir E. CARSON (Dublin University): I only desire to say almost a single word on this question, but as I spoke in favour of a somewhat similar proposal fifteen years ago and have done so almost every year since, I do not desire that the present occasion should pass without saying that I am still in favour of the view I have so often expressed. I am indeed glad that the opportunity has been found by the Chief Secretary to bring forward these proposals which I think have had such a good send-off to-day. I have always supported these proposals, because I believe they are the only possible proposals for Ireland. It is all very well to talk about an ideal system of all creeds mixing in one University. That system has been tried at Queen's College and Trinity College, Dublin, founded as a great Protestant institution. Tests have been abolished in Trinity College and everything has been done to try to get Roman Catholics to come into the college and share its benefits. That system has been pursued for fifty years, and my hon. friend has asked why now should we give what was refused fifty years ago. Why should we not go on for another fifty years? Meanwhile are the youth of Ireland for that reason to be deprived of a University education? That is not statesmanship. The facts as they exist have to be faced and the situation relieved. So far as I am concerned, I have no fear of my Roman Catholic fellow-countrymen, but I prefer them educated and highly educated to uneducated. By devolution of responsibility within the last few years, moreover, we have created responsibilities and offices which have to be filled by educated Irishmen. I join in the thanks expressed by my right hon. friend the Leader of the Opposition to the Chief Secretary for having taken advantage of the opportunity and for having brought forward this Bill.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 307; Noes, 24. (Division List No. 61.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Adkins, W. Ryland D.
Ambrose, Robert
Armitage, R.
Astbury, John Meir
Baker, Sir John (Portsmouth)
Baker, Joseph A. (Finsbury, N.)
Balfour, Rt Hn. A.J. (City Lond.)
Balfour, Robert (Lanark.)
Baring, Godfrey (Isle of Wight)
Barker, John
Barlow, Sir John E. (Somerset)
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Barnard, E. B.
Barnes, G. N.
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Barry, Redmond J. (Tyrone, N.
Beale, W. P.
Beck, A. Cecil
Bell, Richard
Belloc, Hilaire Joseph Peter R.
Benn, W. (T'w'r Hamlets, S.Geo.
Bennett, E. N.
Bethell, Sir J.H (Essex, Romf'rd
Birrell, Rt. Hon. Augustine
Black, Arthur W.
Boland, John
Bowerman, C. W.
Brace, William
Bramsdon, T. A.
Branch, James
Bryce, J. Annan
Bull, Sir William James
Burns, Rt. Hon. John
Burt, Rt. Hon. Thomas
Butcher, Samuel Henry
Byles, William Pollard
Cameron, Robert
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cawley, Sir Frederick
Chance, Frederick William
Cherry, Rt. Hon. R. R.
Clancy, John Joseph
Cleland, J. W.
Clough, William
Cobbold, Felix Thornley
Collins, Stephen (Lambeth)
Collins, Sir Wm. J. (S. Pancras, W
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Cotton, Sir H. J. S.
Cox, Harold
Crean, Eugene
Crooks, William
Crosfield, A. H.
Crossley, William J.
Cullinan, J.
Curran, Peter Francis
Davies, David (Montgomery Co.
Davies, Ellis William (Eifion)
Davies, Timothy (Fulham)
Delany, William
Devlin, Joseph
Dickinson, W.H. (St. Pancras, N.
Dillon, John
Donelan, Captain A.
Duckworth, James
Duffy, William J.
Duncan, C. (Barrow-in-Furn's
Duncan, J. H. (York, Otley)
Edwards, Sir Francis (Radnor)
Erskine, David C.
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Esslemont, George Birnie
Everett, R. Lacey
Faber, G. H. (Boston)
Farrell, James Patrick
Fell, Arthur
Fenwick, Charles
Ferens, T. R.
Ffrench, Peter
Fiennes, Hon. Eustace
Findlay, Alexander
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Fletcher, J. S.
Flynn, James Christopher

Fuller, John Michael F.
Fullerton, Hugh
Gilhooly, James
Gill, A. H.
Glover, Thomas
Gooch, George Peabody (Bath)
Greenwood, G. (Peterborough)
Griffith, Ellis J.
Guinness, Walter Edward
Gulland, John W.
Gurdon, Rt Hn Sir W. Brampton
Gwynn, Stephen Lucius
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Hall, Frederick
Halpin, J.
Hardy, George A. (Suffolk)
Harmsworth, Cecil B. (Worc'r)
Harrison-Broadley, H. B.
Harvey, W. E. (Derbyshire, N.E)
Haslam, James (Derbyshire)
Haslam, Lewis (Monmouth)
Haworth, Arthur A.
Hayden, John Patrick
Hazleton, Richard
Healy, Timothy Michael
Helmsley, Viscount
Hemmerde, Edward George
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Henderson, J.M. (Aberdeen, W.
Henry, Charles S.
Herbert, T. Arnold (Wycombe)
Higham, John Sharp
Hodge, John
Hogan, Michael
Holland, Sir William Henry
Holt, Richard Durning
Hope, W. Bateman (Somerset, N
Horniman, Emslie John
Horridge, Thomas Gardner
Hudson, Walter
Hunt, Rowland
Hyde, Clarendon
Illingworth, Percy H.
Jardine, Sir J.
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Johnson, W. (Nuneaton)
Jones, Sir D. Brynmor (Swansea
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jordan, Jeremiah
Jowett, F. W.
Joyce, Michael
Kekewich, Sir George
Kelley, George D.
Kennaway, Rt. Hn. Sir John H.
Kennedy, Vincent Paul
Kettle, Thomas Michael
Kilbride, Denis
King, Alfred John (Knutsford)
Laidlaw, Robert
Lambert, George
Lamont, Norman
Lane-Fox, G. R.
Lardner, James Carrige Rushe
Law, Hugh A. (Donegal, W.)
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese, Sir Joseph F. (Accrington
Lehmann, R. C.
Lever, A. Levy (Essex, Harwich
Levy, Sir Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
Lupton, Arnold
Macdonald, J. R. (Leicester)
Macdonald, J.M. (Falkirk B'ghs
Maclean, Donald
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah (Down, S.
MacVeigh, Charles (Donegal, E.)
M'Callum, John M.
M'Kean, John
M'Killop, W.
M'Laren, Sir C. B. (Leicester)
M'Micking, Major G.
Maddison, Frederick
Magnus, Sir Philip
Mallet, Charles E.
Manfield, Harry (Northants)
Marks, G. Croydon (Launceston)
Marnham, F. J.
Massie, J.
Meagher, Michael
Meehan, Francis E. (Leitrim, N.
Meehan, Patrick A. (Queen's Co.
Micklem, Nathaniel
Mond, A.
Montagu, E. S.
Mooney, J. J.
Morpeth, Viscount
Morse, L. L.
Morton, Alpheus Cleophas
Muldoon, John
Muntz, Sir Philip A.
Murnaghan, George
Murphy, John (Kerry, East)
Murphy, N. J. (Kilkenny, S.)
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Napier, T. B.
Newnes, F. (Notts, Bassetlaw)
Newnes, Sir George (Swansea)
Nolan, Joseph
Nugent, Sir Walter Richard
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien, Kendal (Tipperary Mid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, William (Cork)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Doherty, Philip
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Grady, J.
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Kelly, James (Roscommon, N.
O'Malley, William
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
O'Shee, James John
Parker, James (Halifax)
Partington, Oswald
Pearce, William (Limehouse)
Pearson, W.H.M. (Suffolk, Eye)
Philipps, Col. Ivor (S'thampton
Phillips, John (Longford, S.)
Pollard, Dr.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, C. E. (Edinb'gh, Central)
Priestley, W.E.B. (Bradford, E.)
Raphael, Herbert H.
Rea, Russell (Gloucester)
Rea, Walter Russell (Scarboro'
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Rees, J. D.
Rendall, Athelstan
Richards, Thomas (W. Monm'th
Richards, T. F. (Wolverh'mpt'n
Richardson, A.
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roberts, Charles H. (Lincoln)
Roberts G. H. (Norwich)
Robertson, Sir G Scott (Bradf'rd
Robertson, J. M. (Tyneside)
Robinson, S.
Roche, Augustine (Cork)
Roche, John (Galway, East)
Roe, Sir Thomas
Rogers, F. E. Newman
Rowlands, J.
Runciman, Walter
Russell, T. W.
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Schwann, Sir C.E. (Manchester)
Seddon, J.
Shackleton, David James
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Silcock, Thomas Ball
Smeaton, Donald Mackenzie
Smyth, Thomas F. (Leitrim, S.)
Snowden, P.
Soares, Ernest J.
Stanley, Hn. A. Lyulph (Chesh.)
Stewart, Halley (Greenock)
Straus, B. S. (Mile End)
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Stuart, James (Sunderland)
Summerbell, T.
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Taylor, John W. (Durham)
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Thomas, Sir A. (Glamorgan, E.)
Thomas, David Alfred (Merthyr
Tillett, Louis John
Tomkinson, James
Torrance, Sir A. M.
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Verney, F. W.
Wadsworth, J.
Waldron, Laurence Ambrose
Walsh, Stephen
Walters, John Tudor
Ward, W. Dudley (Southampton
Wardle, George J.
Waring, Walter
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney)
Waterlow, D. S.
Watt, Henry A.
White, Sir George (Norfolk)
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
White, Patrick (Meath, North)
Whitley, John Henry (Halifax)
Wiles, Thomas
Wilkie, Alexander
Williams, J. (Glamorgan)
Wills, Arthur Walters
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W. R.)
Wilson, J. H. (Middlesbrough)

Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh, N.)
Wilson, P. W. (St. Pancras, S.)
Wilson, W. T. (Westhoughton)
Winfrey, R.
Wood, T. M'Kinnon
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George

Tellers for the Ayes—Mr. Whiteley and Mr. J. A. Pease.

NOES.

Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Barrie, H. T. (Londonderry, N.)
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Clark, George Smith
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Cory, Sir Clifford John
Craig, Charles Curtis (Antrim, S.
Craig, Captain James (Down, E.
Fetherstonhaugh, Godfrey
Gordon, J.
Hamilton, Marquess of
Hazel, Dr. A. E.
Houston, Robert Paterson
MacCaw, William J. MacGeagh
M'Arthur, Charles
M'Calmont, Colonel James
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Sandys, Lieut.-Col. Thos. Myles
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Thomson, W. Mitchell- (Lanark)
Walker, Col. W. H. (Lancashire)
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm

Tellers for the Noes—Mr. Moore and Mr. Lonsdale.

Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Birrell, Mr. Secretary Haldane, and Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland.

IRISH UNIVERSITIES BILL.

"To make further provision with respect to University Education in Ireland," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 184.]

THE FISCAL QUESTION.

Mr. MOND (Chester), in moving "That, in the opinion of this House, any attempt to broaden the basis of taxation by placing small import duties on a large number of articles is opposed to all principles of sound finance, wasteful and uneconomical as regards collection, disturbing and harmful to industry and commerce, would tend to raise the price of all the taxed articles to consumers, and, in practice, would lead to the imposition of high tariffs of the same character as those in force in protected countries," expressed his thanks to the hon. Member for Hereford who, by his courtesy in withdrawing the Resolution which stood in his name on the Paper, had given him the opportunity of raising what he thought was not an unimportant phase of the fiscal question. If asked why he put the Resolution on the Paper, he would say that he did so because of his sympathy with the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition who some time ago went down to Birmingham and issued a new edition of the fiscal programme. Although that edition was accepted as evidence that at last the protectionists had been successful in casting the noose of protection round the unprotected neck of the right hon. Gentleman, he had observed that in speeches in the country at bye-elections and to constituents no reference was ever made to the programme promulgated by the right hon. Gentleman in Birmingham. As the right hon. Gentleman had been somewhat shy of further elucidating his programme on public plaftorms this occasion had been taken to give him an opportunity which it was hoped he would seize. The four principles laid down at Birmingham covered a great deal of ground, and he had endeavoured in his Resolution to confine himself to the first two propositions and then to establish what was the true basis of taxation for revenue. A small duty on manufactured imports was a most foolish, costly, and futile expedient, to which no Chancellor of the Exchequer should ever resort. It was contrary to the great work of Sir Robert Peel and Mr. Gladstone, and to those great Budgets which had been the admiration of financiers all the world over, which were based, not on abstract principles, but on concrete results and facts. Undoubtedly there was a certain number of difficulties to encounter in attacking this question in a theoretical manner. Some of those difficulties were in the mere vagueness of the words used, and he would have to make a certain number of assumptions in dealing with the subject at all. Let him deal with the question of what was meant by "broadening the basis of taxation." There was an impression in the minds of many people, and certainly he would not have expected to have found it in the mind of the Leader of the Opposition, that taxation was paid by articles; but every economist knew that taxes were paid by the people, and the number of articles the taxes were spread over in no way affected the question of the amount of taxes which an individual finally had to pay. An eminent economist, Mr. A. C. Pigou, in an article some time ago, said that certain politicians appeared to suppose that taxes were paid by articles and that taxing a new article would open up a new source of revenue. Taxes were not paid by articles but by the people, and whether they made the taxpayer pay an amount in income-tax, or an amount on twenty articles, he still paid the same amount of taxes. By this so-called broadening of the basis of taxation did they suppose that they in the least relieved the individual from taxation? He asserted with confidence that the principle was financially unsound. It was unsound as was all indirect taxation. He would not assert that it was unpopular, or that it was not convenient, and he would not go as far as Bismarck did in 1879, when, in a famous speech, he said that indirect taxation was a good form of taxation because nobody knew what they had to pay, and, therefore, nobody felt the taxes, whilst direct taxation was very unpopular because everybody knew what they paid. Indirect taxation was not seen clearly, and, therefore, the burden was not felt: if they admitted that, they also admitted the argument in favour of direct taxation. To say that the taxes spread over a number of articles became more and more difficult to trace was to argue, not from the point of view of financiers, but from the point of view of company promoters. The fact that they could not trace the incidence of taxation did not make the taxation any less, but merely made it more difficult for the individual taxpayer to see how much money was taken out of his pocket. Sound finance meant that the taxpayer ought to know how much his taxes amounted to, and then he would begin to feel the burden of taxation and take an interest in economy of administration; until he did that he was not really taking that due part in the government of the country and in sound finance which undoubtedly every taxpayer ought to take. He would go further and say that not only was the finance of our taxation unsound, but it was entirely illusory. And here he came to some of the difficulties to which he hoped that they would have answers that night. The Leader of the Opposition, in a speech at Birmingham, spoke of small duties. Perhaps he would inform them what he meant by small duties. Was 2½ per cent. a small duty, or 5 per cent., or 10 per cent.? How many duties were to be levied, were they to be *ad valorem* or specific duties, and were the duties to be raised equally on every article, or were they to be variable duties? Until they had answers to some of those points it was, of course, difficult to make the calculations which were necessary in order to get the financial results from them. He would like to point out in this connection the curious fact that in the countries where there was a protective system the amount of revenue derived as a result was extremely small. In the United States of America for the year 1904–5 it was only 28 per cent. of the total revenue from the customs taxation on manufactured goods; in Germany less than 20 per cent. of the total customs revenue came from manufactured goods. From raw material in Germany came 5·8 per cent., and from the tax on food 74·2 per cent. The total amount of revenue collected in 1904–5 from manufactures was some £6,000,000, and if they took from that the £800,000 in rebates and drawbacks to the German manufacturers, the net yield from customs duties on manufactured articles was £5,200,000. That was not a very large revenue to be derived from the enormous machinery which was put in operation. But were we to have a larger revenue from the machinery to be put in operation in this country? He would like to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he had gone into the matter arithmetically, though it might appear rather a prosaic method of looking at the subject. Firstly, they wanted to know whether or not the manufactures imported from the Colonies were to be subject to this duty? He could scarcely think that hon. Gentlemen opposite were going to bind the Colonies closer to our hearts by putting a 10 per cent. duty on their manufactured products. In 1906 the total schedule—and our schedules were very imperfect in this matter—of manufactured and semi-manufactured goods imported into this country was £136,000,000. Did they propose to put a 10 per cent. duty on all those products? Of the £136,000,000 something like £20,000,000 was on lead, copper, zinc, etc., and nobody he should think would call these manufactured products. They had been desiring for a long time a definition of raw material and manufactured products. When were they going to have that definition? Were broken stones and iron manufactured products? The distinction between raw material and manufactured products was a fictitious one; it did not exist in fact. It was one which did not exist in any tariff in the world. The American, German, and French tariffs taxed raw material, and Members might find in their constituencies some who would want to treat as manufactured products goods which had been considered raw material, and they would find that granite for tombstones would have to be shifted to meet the wishes of some of their constituents. If he took the Board of Trade classification, imperfect as it was and including as it did manufactured goods like cotton seed oil and cotton seed cake, he could not arrive at more than £100,000,000, and not more than £50,000,000 fully manufactured goods. He would give them the benefit of the larger figures, and with a 5 per cent. duty, which he called a small duty, they would have a revenue of £5,000,000. But what was that revenue going to cost to collect? That was a point which never seemed to have been gone into with sufficient care by those who had investigated the matter on the other side. Our present cost of customs collection was over £1,000,000, and we had an exceedingly simple tariff and exceedingly few ports of entry. The cost of revenue collection in Germany was something like £3,000,000, and there it was obviously a simple thing. The number of their harbours and waterways was small. We had £1,000,000 paid now on a small number of articles. He had been through the Civil Service Estimates, and he thought it was no exaggeration to say that under such a schedule the additional cost would be something between £3,000,000 and £4,000,000 a year, or even £5,000,000. Supposing he took the least figure, the amount for which they were going to harass and wrong every importer, cancel the whole of our commercial treaties, and cause disturbances and dissatisfaction to the trade and commerce of the country, was only £2,000,000. Perhaps 10 per cent. was a small duty; they would with a 10 per cent. duty have a total revenue of £4,000,000. Surely nobody would say that it would be worth while, not for any protective idea, not for the purpose of providing more employment, not to exclude the pettifogging foreigner, and not for the purpose of binding the Colonies together, but for a revenue only of £5,000,000, to upset our whole fiscal structure. The right hon. Gentleman opposite would upset and worry every importer and merchant in the City of London in order to raise £4,000,000.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN (Worcestershire, E.): I do not wish to interrupt the hon. Gentleman, but he appeals directly to me. £4,000,000 is roughly the amount raised by the coal-duty. What was the cost of collection?

MR. MOND said he had no access to official figures, but the right hon. Gentleman was proposing to put a duty on about 1,000 articles. Had he ever read the German schedule of sixty pages of manufactured articles? The difficulty was that all the articles would have to be inspected infinitely more carefully than now. However the line was drawn between manufactured and unmanufactured articles, the former would have to be inspected in a manner in which they were not to-day. The export of coal took place in a concentrated area and the duty was very easy to collect. There were 196 ports registered, at each of which there would have to be some kind of preventive officer. Were they going to make it practically impossible to import manufactured goods except at the few ports where the necessary arrangements now existed, or were they going to establish Custom House officers at those 196 ports fully equipped? The right hon. Gentleman had never told them how he was going to deal with the enormous transit trade passing through England, amounting to £94,000,000 a year. That was a business question to which they must have a business answer. Were they going to have a series of free ports about the coast, and if so which towns and ports were to be favoured? If they did not have free ports, were they going to throw this £94,000,000 of transhipment business into the free ports of Hamburg and Bremen? Anyone who knew anything about this business knew how delicate it was, how small difficulties in loading, port dues, and matters of that kind would drive traders from one port to another—from one centre to another. How were they going to deal with the £94,000,000 of transhipment trade? It was a very big figure and it was a very big business, and they ought to have the scheme before them before they were asked to plunge wildly into reversing the fiscal system which had stood them in good stead for two generations. Bonded warehouses formed a large part of the expenses of duties in foreign countries. Were they going to establish bonded warehouses, and if so had the cost been estimated? Were they going to pay for them out of the revenue? If so, what was collected would very soon go in bricks and mortar. Were hon. Gentlemen going to follow their usual practice and borrow money for a free trade Government to pay back? Even then it would cost a lot of money. Were they going to allow drawbacks as the German and American manufacturers did? If so, could anybody inform them how much further the revenue would be diminished by the amount of duty repaid? Did the right hon. Gentleman think even £5,000,000 was a reasonable revenue for which to upset the whole fiscal structure of the country? There was one point it seemed to him which was misapprehended, and that was the enormous worry and disturbance to trade and commerce. Whether the article was dutiable or non-dutiable they would give an amount of trouble, extra clerical labour and work and anxiety to every trader in the country. He could give an example in his own experience. He was interested in some mines in Canada, and they were importing from a well-known firm in America a large amount of mining machinery which was duty free Some of the machinery for nearly a fortnight remained on the railway siding to wait for an inspector to come and pass it as duty free. In the meantime the hands, the erectors and contractors, were all standing at the mine incapable of proceeding with their work while this red tape was being gone through. That was one example out of hundreds. A friend of his took a quilt to Germany. When it got there, the Custom House officer said it was dutiable as silk. It was not silk, and his friend had a long argument. Finally he got it through. He did not say that if they could turn this country into an earthly paradise, if more men could be employed at high wages, and if there could be no longer any distress or trouble, it was not worth while to go to a great deal of inconvenience to bring that about. But if they told him it was worth while for £4,000,000 or £5,000,000 a year to give an immense amount of trouble to traders and importers, if every lady who came back from Paris had her luggage turned out and all her things examined in the way they were at New York—if they thought that was going to be a popular policy they were widely mistaken. It was foolish. It was unworthy of any great mind. He was interested in the erection of engineering plant in Germany and Italy. They had tariffs in those countries and the wretched people who were buying this plant, which they could get made in England much better than in their own country, had to have a larger capital to carry on their industry. The amount of trouble that the calculations gave to the seller and the purchaser was simply incredible. They found the same trouble in the United States. A great part of the time of the merchants in New York was taken up, not in business, but in disputes with the Custom Houses as to which schedule their products should come under. If the Customs people were right, the importer sometimes made not a profit but a loss. That was a great waste of energy and time, and the extra clerical work and labour entailed represented increased cost to the consumer. These people were not going to keep an extra staff and increase their general charges in that manner out of their own pockets. Was it worth while for four or five millions a year to incur all this expense and trouble and create all this dissatisfaction? There was one further point of considerable importance, and that was the question of the future. The last part of his proposition was that they might establish a tariff for revenue purposes only. They might be as innocent as new born lambs, their souls might be as white as the driven snow, but if they once introduced this subtle element of a tax on the article which was manufactured untaxed in this country they had begun to walk down that decline on which nothing had or could or would ever arrest a nation. Germany, America, Canada, and France all bore eloquent testimony to the truth of his proposition. Germany, after a period of happy free trade from 1870 to 1880, called for a revision of her tariff and requested Bismarck for the purpose of financing the Empire to undertake a revenue tariff. They were supposed to be small duties. Germany had a tariff in 1879, another in 1885, another in 1887, another in 1890, another shortly afterwards, and they had had another since. The tariff produced for revenue purposes only had mounted and mounted and mounted till it had become a protective tariff. What had happened? The last tariff the German Parliament passed was forced by the agrarian party under the threat that they would refuse to vote the money necessary for the Navy; they were as patriotic as protectionists always were; they demanded a high duty on corn and the starvation of the people or there would be no Navy. With the sword held to their breasts the German Government were compelled to pass the last tariff. The United States had a long record in the matter. They began with a tariff in 1790, which was a revenue tariff. In 1816 they tried a little protection. In 1824 they started a little more. In 1833 they had a compromise tariff. In 1842 they raised their tariff again. In 1846 they put the tariff down again. In 1851 they put it down again. In 1861 they put it up again. In 1862 they had another tariff. In 1864 they raised it again. In 1870, 1882, 1890, 1894, and 1897 they had Tariff Acts. What an occupation for a great Parliament and a great country! What a happy prospect to hold out to them to spend their time in bolstering up decayed and ruined industries. They would find very curious phenomena if they went into the thing a little. When trade was bad it was always the fault of the tariff. It was either too high or too low. When the tariff was low and depression came along they screwed it up. When there was a high tariff and trade depression they put it down. What a splendid regulating system! The result was always uncertain, producing something entirely different from what was expected. In every country a tariff had always been the starting point, but protection had been the end, and it had gained and gained. Interests were set up which no statesman had ever been strong enough to resist, as had been shown in Canada, where the tariff was retarding the progress of the country. Naturally they would be raising up interests which they could not throw off. If they induced people in this country to establish industries under a revenue tariff, they would be establishing another lot of vested interests, and, as in the United States, they would perhaps have to find sources of expenditure in order to keep up the tariff. If there was to be a tariff, let it be a high one; then it would do something. The right hon. Member for West Birmingham never talked about small tariffs, never said he wanted little innocent revenue tariffs; he wanted to exclude the hated foreign product, which was taking the bread out of the mouths of English workmen. A revenue tariff would not do that; then why not tell the workmen so? It was because the Party opposite wished to allay the fears of their more timid supporters. Yet the free trade Unionists, the sacrificial lamb of the Party, were always being led to the slaughter by the confederates, and the arch-priest of the Party told them it would not hurt much. Let them cut its throat! Let them know what the issue was which every tariff reform speaker and lecturer was putting before the country. It had taken a long time to drive the Leader of the Opposition so far, but let him now plunge a little further. The tariff reformers could not persuade this country that the great work was fruitless which Gladstone and

Peel did in striking off thousands of duties that were found to produce no revenue and which it did not pay to put on. Let them forsake the flimsy ground of the new Birmingham eirenicon and take their stand by the old Birmingham policy; then the trade of the country would know where it was. He submitted his Resolution with confidence to the House, and he submitted it with equal confidence to any body of expert traders and to the consumers of this country. He begged to move.

*MR. RUSSELL REA (Gloucester) said he rose to second the Resolution which had been so ably moved by his hon. friend. He would not occupy very many minutes, because he felt that on an occasion like that the time at their disposal was so limited that it was not justifiable for him to occupy long. Tariff reformers professed that they did not want to return to the old full-blooded protection of the early years of the 19th century. But they forgot that in the middle of that century there was a great tariff experiment on their own lines. It was a scientific tariff of the modern kind and contained colonial preference, and it was the failure of that tariff that completed the full conversion of Peel and Gladstone to free trade. A Committee of the House of Commons which sat in 1840 and was presided over by Joseph Hume recommended a scientific tariff, which was adopted by Sir Robert Peel in 1842. The principles of that tariff were the reduction of duties on raw material, which in no case were to exceed 5 per cent., of duties on partially manufactured articles to a point not to exceed 12 per cent., of duties on manufactured articles to a point not to exceed 20 per cent., and it also contained the principle of preferential reductions of the duties on colonial products. That was the tariff advocated to-day by tariff reformers. It proved a failure, and it was its failure that converted Peel and Gladstone to free trade. In the course of his study of the economic history of that period he was very anxious to purchase a copy of the Report of the Hume Commission, but failed until he came across a second-hand copy, which he found had been in the possession of the late Sir Stafford Northcote, and had voluminous notes upon it in that statesman's own handwriting. Those notes showed that the late Sir Stafford Northcote had no belief in small duties, and one calculation he made was to the effect that in the two years following the tariff of 1842 the produce of the tariff on 17 articles was £21,417,000, whilst the total revenue was £22,710,000, so that 95 per cent. of the whole revenue of the country was collected from 17 articles which were subject to tariff. That illustrated what he had said that there were only 46 articles in the tariff which yielded revenue worth collecting while 822 articles produced nothing. They knew what the state of the country was in what were known as the "hungry forties." The whole system of small taxes had been changed since then. The only people who paid taxes on imported goods were the taxpayers who lived in the country where the taxes were imposed. What he would like to know was whether tariff reformers and the Party opposite advocated the institution of a general tariff or not. "General tariff" was a term which had a very definite meaning in diplomacy and finance. It meant a tariff in which taxation was the rule, and freedom from taxation by the construction of a "free list" the exception. It meant a tariff that could be expanded into a penal tariff or reduced into a preferential tariff. He thought they had a right to ask the advocates of tariff reform whether they desired a general tariff in this country. Hon. Gentlemen opposite had spoken with two voices, and it was very hard to reconcile them. Speaking in the Albert Hall on 8th July, 1905, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, dealing with the subject of small taxes and a general tariff, said—

> "Retaliation is an excellent text; so is Mesopotamia . . . . It is no use for a man to go down into the country and to propose to be an advocate of preference for the colonies, and at the same time to boast that he is unwilling to pay the price. We want the big revolver when we meet the men who are armed at all points. [Cheers, and "Well-loaded, Sir."] I agree with the interruption. That is the whole point of my argument. What is the use of a revolver which is not loaded? We will load our revolver with a general tariff . . . . The revolver is not given to us as a toy—it is meant for use, that its charge—this general tariff of which I speak—may be turned

at a moment into a penal tariff. What is the good, for us, in our case at any rate, for us who are not politicians, to conceal what we mean?"

The right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition, speaking in the Merchant Taylors' Hall on 12th February, 1906, said—

> "When I am told by another section of my friends that a small duty on corn is an absolute necessity and you can do nothing without it, I say why lay that down as a proposition? Are you sure it is a necessity? Are you sure that when the question has practically to be dealt with it will be dealt with by machinery? In the same way with a general tariff, do you mean that it is impossible to carry out what is called retaliation unless a general tariff is part of that scheme? I refuse, for my part, to make that limitation as I have refused to make the other limitation."

In view of these statements, they had a right to ask what was the policy of the Party opposite. It they came into power, did they mean to impose a general tariff? He did not think the Leader of the Opposition could complain if the country universally interpreted his vote to-night, it he voted against the Resolution, as a vote for a general tariff.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That, in the opinion of this House, any attempt to broaden the basis of taxation by placing small import duties on a large number of articles is opposed to all principles of sound finance, wasteful and uneconomical as regards collection, disturbing and harmful to industry and commerce, would tend to raise the price of all taxed articles to consumers, and, in practice, would lead to the imposition of high tariffs of the same character as those in force in protected countries."—(*Mr. Mond.*)

*MR. HILLS (Durham) said the mover of the Resolution had covered a very wide field. He could not pretend to soar to the heights which the hon. Member had reached. The hon. Member had stated that those on his side of the House had great minds, while their opponents had small minds. He was quite content to look at this question from the point of view of the national interest and to see how far it affected the country at this particular time. He agreed that persons were taxed, not things; but that only half stated the case. The object of extending taxation over a large number of articles was to tax the person according to his ability to pay. He would give a concrete case. He supposed that the hon. Member for Chester smoked cigars sometimes or he might have a motor car. If these things were taxed, he was taxed according to his means and substance, or, in other words, according to his expenditure. But if all the revenue of the country were raised by indirect taxation, it would be a far less fair means of making the individual pay according to his ability to pay, than a tariff would be. [MINISTERIAL cries of "No."] The second point was this. At present they taxed a large number of articles. The things taxed, however, were the very last that would be taxed, if they taxed people according to ability to pay. Take sugar, the sugar tax was practically a poll tax. It was said that if we had a general tariff the sum obtained would be so small and the cost of collection so great that in the end we should be no better off. The proposal of a revenue duty on manufactures was not a blind 10 per cent. all round. It was a 10 per cent. net revenue. If the hon. Member asked on what standard it was proposed to fix the amount of the duty, he would refer him to every scientific tariff the world had ever known. Did the hon. Member not know that in the German tariff, for example, the gradation of taxes depended on the labour involved in the production of the article? According as an article was produced by the employment of much or little labour, so the tax was increased or lessened. Instead of the 5 per cent. or 10 per cent. on manufactures being a blind duty all round, it was a 5 or 10 per cent. net revenue. After all, the amount taken at customs was only one part of the revenue produced by taxation. He held that the effect of any taxation of this sort was to a certain extent protective; but in so far as it was protective it must have some effect on the industries of this country. All the internal taxes were in some sort taxes on production. The income tax was certainly, correctly speaking, was a tax on production. If production was stimulated the taxable capacity of the country was stimulated, and therefore there was a large increase in the standard or staple taxes. When the mover of the Resolution got up and reduced his sum to four or five millions, he ought to look further afield to see whether there were not certain things which he had not considered. Even at the Custom House the returns would be much greater than he made out, and if there were added the increase of the taxable capacity of the country, it would be found a very great deal. He was entirely at one with the mover of the Resolution as to the difficulties of any proposed new system. In his own opinion the present system of taxation had gone mad on simplicity. [Ironical MINISTERIAL laughter.] Yes, gone mad on simplicity, and for this reason; that they had gone entirely for ease of collection. All they had thought of was what the Chancellor of the Exchequer could get in most easily in the way of taxation. They had gone in for Mr. Gladstone's principle of a few taxes on articles of general consumption. He maintained at once that that was the worst standard that could be had. It simply meant that the poor paid an excessive amount of that taxation. It seemed simple to collect, but from the point of view of the poor taxpayer it was demonstrably wrong. Although the scheduled manufactured articles in the German tariff occupied 70 pages, and although it looked a very formidable list yet it presesd much less hardly upon the German taxpayer than the sugar duty did here. To say that it would be difficult to introduce a new system was a pure confession of weakness. If the thing was right, it ought to be their duty to do it. For seven years a Committee of experts had sat on the German tariff, the whole trade of Germany for the last twenty years had been examined, and 2,000 witnesses had given evidence. The result of that labour might or might not be accepted by hon. Gentlemen opposite, but it was absurd to say that it was wasted time. All the free trade party seemed to think that it was not the business of the country to consider what industries were carried on in the country. They seemed to think that the interest of the individual was always the same as the interest of the State. They knew that the manufacturer looked quite rightly to get his profit, and yet they seemed to think that by doing so he must conserve the interests of the State. But he maintained that the State had a great interest in the industries of the country apart from the interest of the individual producer. It had a perfect right to say that certain industries were good for, or were necessary for, the community. All the arguments about the selfish nature of protection were rather small; it was not as if they argued for tariff protection only for the sake of the producer of manufactured articles. He might be entirely wrong, but did they suppose that people like those who had gone into this movement of tariff reform were mainly concerned for themselves and that they took all this time and trouble for the mere protection of their own interest? Surely not. The State was directly interested in the amount of production turned out by the manufacturing industries; but according to free trade doctrine that did not matter to the State. He contended that the interest of the individual was at nearly all points in conflict with the interests of the State, and that it was the duty of the State to interfere and regulate production, and it could only do that by means of taxes. Gentlemen on the other side of the House talked about giant industries held down by the unseen bonds of thousands of taxes. He disagreed with that entirely. The only way in which the State could interfere with and help industry was by means of taxes. [MINISTERIAL cries of "Oh, oh!"] What other ways were there? If they gave up that means they surrendered all control over the industries of the country, and that was a counsel of despair. It meant saying that they simply meant to let people do what they liked, and that those who represented the whole community were to do nothing at all. He took his stand on quite different grounds. He held that by taxes they could raise revenue and also do a great deal for the productive power of the country. The mover of the Resolution had told the House a great deal about the evils which existed in protective countries, about the people eating horse-flesh and black bread and all that sort of thing. He suspected that the hon. Gentleman was not quite serious in that part of his argument. He would ask the hon. Gentleman to look for a minute and see how the protective system really worked in Germany. The hon. Gentleman spoke of Germany in the happy days of free trade. Happy days of free trade—when Germans were leaving the country at the rate of 200,000 a year! When they came to look at any industrial system they must look at it from the point of view of what it had done. Hon. Members opposite defended their system, but any system broke down which did not employ the people of the country, and surely they who advocated a change had something to say for themselves. What was happening now in Germany? She was absorbing into her industrial life double the number of people we were. They ought not to speak of unemployed and of the percentages of people who were out of work. They ought to look at those who were employed rather than at those who were not. They never said how many people this country absorbed into its system year by year; and on that ground all the figures quoted by hon. Gentlemen opposite were beside the question. The President of the Board of Trade had told them a few days ago about the amount of unemployment in the United States. The answer to that was, that in the last ten years the United States had absorbed 15,000,000 people, for whom they had, more or less, found work. Of course, it might be said that the United States was a new and undeveloped country, and not a fair test to take; but let them look at Germany, where they had absorbed 4,000,000 people, and their system had suited their country so much better than our system that they had added double the number to their population that we did. It might be said that emigration was a remedy for unemployment. It was not a remedy; it might have been so in the old days when we sent men across the seas as consumers who bought our goods. But now we sent producers who competed with us. The more people we could absorb into our system the better for us. We were only on the threshold of a new day, when the number of people would be increased to an incredibly greater extent than now, and when they would find employment through the enormous extension of machinery and of our productive power. If an industry was started, population and capital flowed in, and if we started industries here, people would not leave us, and this drain which we had every year would not take place. The hon. Member who moved the Resolution talked about protectionist interests. He quite admitted that all fiscal systems must help somebody—certain interests were suited by certain systems. Free trade suited certain interests. But what they had to look at was not the interests of this body of men or of that industry, but the interests of the country as a whole. Did the Party opposite mean to defend their system as perfect? Did they mean to go on year after year, with all these people out of employment, and suggest no remedy at all? Everything they suggested was merely a palliative, and when they on that side tried to find a remedy, hon. Gentlemen opposite said they were selfish, simple-minded, and stupid protectionists. But they did not answer the question that was before them now. Their speeches might be made anywhere; they were perfectly out of place there. It was the existing condition of things they had to meet, and the Party opposite made no sort of attempt to meet them. If they did not, he could assure them that they on that side of the House would get their chance.

*MR. HAROLD COX (Preston) said he had listened with so much pleasure to the speech which they had just heard that he would try and answer a few of the points which the hon. Member made. He began by using what appeared to be a very fair argument, that there was theoretically a case for a multitude of duties, because by that means they would spread the burden of taxation over a multitude of people, and would make people pay according to their means. He thought, however, the hon. Member overlooked the fact that they were by no means more sure where the burden was going to fall than they were at present. He had also overlooked the much more serious consideration, that if they were going to get a large revenue that way they must tax the things that the mass of the people used. They could not get a large revenue by taxing the things which the wealthy people used, though by doing so they might get a little but not much. He quite agreed with what the hon. Member said about the sugar and tea taxes. He was opposed to those taxes, but he would point out that if the hon. Member wanted scientifically to make taxes rest on those people who could best bear the burden, then the only scientific tax was the income-tax. He, personally, was in favour of extending the income-tax downwards so that every man should pay an income-tax, however small it might be, and make some direct contribution to the great club to which they all belonged, and so that he might know the amount of the contribution he was making. The reason they did not extend the income-tax downwards was the trouble of collection, but he believed the tremendous moral and political value they would gain would fully justify the extra cost involved in the extra trouble of collecting. The hon. Gentleman had also told them that the German scientific tariff was based on the theory of putting extra duties on those things that contained a larger amount of labour. On that theory he presumed the hon. Gentleman would put a larger duty on cloth than he would on yarn. Would that be an *ad valorem* duty ?

*MR. HILLS said not necessarily. It was not always the same thing. The labour value of each product would have to be found and the labour value taken into consideration in the tax.

*MR. HAROLD COX: But how ? By weight or by value ? With staple articles of manufacture, ultimately the question came down to one of money value.

*MR. HILLS: Not money value, labour value.

*MR. HAROLD COX said the point he wished to make was that the amount of labour on £100 of yarn was the same as on £100 of cloth. If the hon. Member doubted that he would ask him the old question of their childhood—Which was the heavier, a pound of feathers or a pound of lead.

MR. CARLILE (Hertfordshire, St. Albans) said in transferring yarn into woollen cloth they added to the amount of labour.

*MR. HAROLD COX thought with all respect he had already got as far as that. His point was that £100 of yarn contained a greater weight of yarn than would be made up into £100 of cloth. If they took £100 worth of each they would find the same labour in the lump. It must be so.

*MR. HILLS: In £100 worth of yarn there is a certain amount of wool and a certain amount of labour. In £100 worth of cloth there was a smaller amount of wool and a larger amount of labour.

*MR. HAROLD COX said that the wool represented labour. The hon. Member for Durham was suffering from a difficulty which all tariff reformers had felt—the difficulty of discriminating between raw material and manufactured articles. He challenged anyone to say whether leather was a raw material or a manufactured article. Let them take the case of oil, which was raw material in the manufacture of linoleum, but oil was also a manufactured article. A Scottish manufacturer of lineolum had told him that he was so troubled by the French tariff that he thought of transferring his factory to France. He had gone so far as to select a site, when it occurred to him to ask at what price he could get his raw materials in France. He then discovered that the French duties were so heavy that it paid better to continue the manufacture in Scotland. The hon. Member said that he was in favour of the principle of regulating the industries of the country for the good of the country. But it was impossible to give an advantage to particular industries by means of a tariff, unless that tariff enabled the manufacturer to obtain higher prices than he could without a tariff. By encouraging some industries we must consequently depress others.

*MR. HILLS: The thing that interests the producer is not the price, but the profit. A larger sale means a larger profit; and, therefore, an extended market may give a larger profit without raising the price.

*MR. HAROLD COX said that any producer could get a larger sale by selling more cheaply. What the producer wanted was a price above what he would get if there were no duty, and that must be paid by the rest of the community, and thus fall on other industries. It should be asked what industries hon. Members proposed to benefit and what they proposed to injure. No hon. Member opposite had said what industries they proposed to benefit, although when they went into particular districts of the country they advocated a protective tax for the benefit of the industries of those districts, as, for example, cement and hops. But as a national policy they had not declared that for the national interest such and such industries should be extended. It was impossible for them to do this, because, while the agricultural industries would be benefited by taxing agricultural imports, the manufacturing industries would be injured by the same duties. Hon. Members could not benefit all the industries of the country at the same time, and they had never said what was the industry from the national point of view they wished to benefit. Reference had been made to the growth of daffodils in the Scilly Isles. But why was it an objectionable industry to grow daffodils? They gave a great deal of pleasure to humanity, and if we could produce daffodils here at a greater advantage than we could produce corn, why should we not produce them? What national advantage was there in producing corn when we could produce daffodils more profitably? If the object of hon. Members was to increase the amount of labour on the land it was better to grow things like fruit and daffodils than corn, because corn growing was a machine industry, meaning that fewer people would be employed on the land. Did the hon. Member realise that the effect of his plan was not to encourage people to improve their methods of production, but to discourage them in taking pains? He would give a practical illustration of this. A maker of damask table cloths for the market in the United States had an offer of particularly fine linen yarn from Belgium. He wrote to the Irish spinners by whom he was usually supplied stating that he had this Belgium offer at a lower price. The Irishmen protested against the conduct of the foreigner, but some of them went to Belgium and discovered that the success of the Belgians was due to a new machine made in England. They erected this machine in their own works, and now they supplied the yarn at a lower price than that at which the Belgians could supply it. The hon. Member in his test of employment omitted the case of Lancashire, which lived on an export industry. The whole of Lancashire was dependent upon an industry which imported its raw material from the ends of the earth, and sent out manufactured goods to the ends of the earth. What duty could hon. Members put on which would benefit the industry of Lancashire? There was not a single duty which could possibly bring any advantage to the Lancashire industry, representing, as it did, one-fourth of our total exports. On the other hand, there was scarcely a duty which could be put on which would not injure that industry. The effect of all these schemes of fiscal reform was to subsidise particular industries at the expense of the whole community. Free trade, also, might be looked upon from a selfish point of view, but there was this great difference, that the free-trader was the man who sought to get his materials cheap, and in making that request he was putting himself at one with the whole of his fellow-beings. The protectionist was always wanting to sell something dear, and in doing so he was setting himself against the whole of the rest of the community. In the one case the selfishness was social; in the other, anti-social. The difference between the protectionist and free-trader was that the free-trader sought something which would benefit himself and all his fellow men, the protectionist sought something which would benefit himself against his fellow-men. He ventured to suggest that those Gentlemen below the gangway who advocated socialism, and those above the gangway who advocated tariff reform, were advocating the same principle. Both were appealing to the

State to subsidise somebody; both were trusting to what they could wheedle out of Parliament instead of trusting to their own energies and efforts. Those above the gangway wished to tax the food of those who sat below, and those below the gangway wished to tax the dividends and rents of those above. This difference of opinion naturally gave rise to some little ill-feeling. But give them time. The irresistible laws of logic and the exigencies of political campaigning would bring both groups into one camp, whence they would march forth shoulder to shoulder to plunder honest men.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: It is, I suppose, an inevitable law of these debates, in whatever narrow limits they appear to be fixed, to wander at large over the whole vast area of the fiscal controversy. I am not going to intervene in that part of the hon. Gentleman's dialogue which he had with my hon. friend the Member for Durham. It was highly instructive and entertaining. It had more resemblance to the modes of discussion of the sixteenth century than it had to the ordinary debates of this House, but I am not sure that it has any relevancy to the Motion we are now discussing. The Motion is strictly defined. It relates strictly to the question of whether we should or should not broaden the basis of taxation and increase the number of articles from the taxation of which the revenue of this country is obtained. Amusing as was the hon. Gentleman's speech, especially in its latter portion, in which he drew a parallel between the Party sitting below the gangway and those sitting on these benches, and spoke of us both as assaulting the citadel of which the hon. Gentleman himself has become almost the only defender, I do not see that there is any sign of any co-operation with him either in this or any other question. But the hon. Member did not profess to touch the subject of the Resolution, and if I turn from his speech and go back to the speeches of the mover and seconder, which did more or less touch on the issue before us, I suppose I have to regard the Motion they were defending as the lineal but rather degenerate successor of those private Members' Motions with which we were so familiar in the last Parliament, and from which hon. Gentlemen opposite derived so much gratification. That gratification, I suppose, is diminishing. I do not fancy they look forward to those Tuesday and Wednesday evenings devoted to fiscal reform with the same exhilarating sentiments of hope and expectation which formerly animated them. A good many causes may be suggested for that change of view, some of them purely electoral, to which I will not further refer—some of them purely electoral, others relating to the real economic basis of this controversy on which I think they are beginning to discover there is a good deal to be said which their economic philosophy has so far not dreamed of. There are a certain number of them, no doubt, who still with perfect self-contentment continue to repeat the old fallacies long ago given up by every competent economist. [Ministerial Cries of "Name."] There is the hon. Gentleman who seconded the Motion, the Member for Gloucester. He announced as an axiom that the whole duty on all imported goods was necessarily and inevitably and always paid by the importing country.

*Mr. RUSSELL REA: My opinions on that point have been published, and I did not express my view in that absolute manner.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. Gentleman said the people of the country which put on the indirect taxation were the people who paid it.

*Mr. RUSSELL REA: There are other cases in which, of course, the incidence of the tax is divided.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I think if the hon. Gentleman looks at the report of his speech to-morrow he will see that he made the proposition in a far more unqualified form. Of course, I accept his statement. He does not go the length of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who lays it down as an economic proposition that not only do the taxpayers of the country which puts on the tax pay all, but they probably pay more. If either the Chancellor of the Exchequer or the hon. Gentleman who seconded the Motion were to give any such answer at an examination in political economy in any of our Universities, he would undoubtedly be plucked. I was rather astonished to hear the hon. Gentleman who has just sat down, who has given a great deal of study to these questions and is as competent as any man in the House to deal with them, say that because Germany was twice as large in area as this country it was twice as easy to employ its population.

MR. HAROLD COX: I only said there was obviously room for more expansion of the population.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I think, if the hon. Gentleman reflects on the proposition, he will see that the power of any country to support a population depends hardly to any extent upon the area; it depends on the resources of the country. I mean on its capital and its power of organising industrially. These are elements which enable a country to support population, and to bring in a mere question of square miles as a solution of that problem is a method of dealing with economic problems which is not, I think, quite worthy of the knowledge and dexterity of the hon. Member for Preston. All the Gentlemen on that side of the House have, I think, so far followed their previous examples on similar occasions as to occupy most of their speeches in earnestly pressing us for details of any plan for carrying out fiscal reform. There was a period when that kind of appeal had a certain plausibility. I always thought it very irrational. I always took the view that it was only the Government that actually had to prepare the Budget and conduct the policy of the country which could be expected to deal with the details of the measures they put forward. I am aware that when they were in Opposition hon. Gentlemen took another view. They have become far tamer now that they are in office. If they will allow me to say so, they take a far more rational view of the situation. We wanted very much to know last night what they were going to lay before the country upon another question—a question not less important than fiscal reform. Two Ministers spoke. They involved themselves in a cloud of words. Friends and foes left the House absolutely ignorant as to what the view of His Majesty's Government is in regard to Home Rule. I am not going to dwell upon that theme. At all events, it saves us in the future from that preposterous method which hon. Gentlemen have indulged in for four years, and which even after last night they have not yet got out of the habit of employing, of insisting that one Parliament should pronounce upon what the next Parliament is going to do. Hon. Gentlemen opposite choose to keep their own counsel as to what they are going to do when the next Parliament returns them, but it is very inconsistent with their own appeals and requests on previous occasions. The mover of the Motion, both in his speech and in the words of the proposition which he has laid before the House, says that any small duty upon imported goods, whatever it may be in the beginning, will lead inevitably to a policy of protection. All through my Parliamentary life I have belonged to a Party which has watched with anxiety the beginning of things which, though very good, may develop into something which we think would be bad. I suppose that is the Conservative attitude of mind, and it may be pardonable in a Conservative politician. We have always been denounced by hon. Gentlemen opposite for that attitude. They have always said: "Treat the thing on its merits. Do not consider what is going to become of it when it is passed into law. Leave that to future Parliaments and to public opinion. Do what is right and best at the moment, and leave posterity to prevent any irrational, harmful developments of the good system which you establish." Let the hon. Gentlemen who moved and seconded the Motion follow that principle. Let them not disturb their dreams by the idea of a strange and extraordinary system of taxation in this country, which nobody, so far as I know, has ever recommended, and certainly does not follow rationally or logically from the broadening of the basis of taxation which I have consistently recommended both before and after the fiscal controversy arose. It is quite true the hon. Member who moved the Motion conjured up all sorts of terrors as to what would happen to our commerce if a small general duty were imposed upon foreign manufactured goods. He said trade would leave your ports—[MINISTERIAL cries of "So it would"]—and would go to the free ports of Bremen and Hamburg. I thought Bremen and Hamburg were situate in Germany, and that, in the opinion of the hon. Gentleman Germany was the ideal of a country which had adopted protection.

MR. J. M. ROBERTSON (Northumberland, Tyneside): Hamburg is a free port,

MR. BALFOUR: Then a free port can exist in a country which is protected.

MR. MOND: I was asking which ports were you going to make free ports.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: That is not what the hon. Gentleman said in his speech. He said in his speech that the result of adopting a small duty would be that our commerce would go to the ports of a country that had a big duty. The hon. Gentleman spent the greater part of his speech in dealing with the enormous cost of collection inevitable, as he supposed, to the imposition of small duties on manufactured goods. I am amazed at that view. In the first place, the hon. Gentleman is wrong in supposing that a duty which is in itself simple necessarily carries with it simplicity of treatment in the Customs House of the country. I suppose no duty could be more simple to impose than the sugar duty. Has the hon. Gentleman consulted the Blue-book issued by the Commissioners of Customs upon the sugar duty? He repeated from a very old Blue-book of 1840 the arguments against a complex tariff based upon the assumption that if you have a complex tariff very small duties are raised. If the hon. Member will look at page 68 of the Blue-book he will find that, as a result of our putting on the sugar duty, we have to examine and differentiate between an enormous number of separately imported articles. From one of these articles I observe that the net amount collected in the year was £4, from another article £79, from a third £24, from another £35, from another £90, and from another £1. Therefore it is clear that the simpler system of duties which now prevails in this country may be simple so far as the legislation in this House is concerned, but it is not simple so far as the tables show us in its working at the Customs House. But I believe that the apparent complication is in reality a very small argument against the sugar duty. The sugar duty may be good or bad, but the enormous number of articles which have to be enumerated as taxable under the sugar duty are taxed without any difficulty, and I believe that the drawbacks claimed by manufacturers when they export are repaid without any difficulty and friction and without that enormous cost which the hon. Gentleman appeared to think was the inevitable result of such fiscal arrangements. I am told for example that Huntley and Palmer's, whose biscuits require a small amount of sugar for their manufacture, can therefore claim a drawback when they export their biscuits. At first sight we might expect there would be no transaction more complicated than giving back to the exporter the exact amount of drawback on the fractional amount of sugar contained on each biscuit in one of their boxes. But it can be done, and is done, without the smallest difficulty. It involves no expense and no trouble, and carries with it no fraud. I heard some gentleman express dissent. I do not believe what I have stated will be contradicted by anyone who has access to the officials of the Board of Customs, and it is a great illusion to suppose that a system which looked complicated on paper was necessarily under modern organisation a difficult system to carry out in practice. The mover of this Resolution talked about the enormous cost necessarily involved in the raising of taxation under a new system. Has he compared the cost of raising taxation in this country, with the cost in foreign countries? Is it so clear that the simpler system of this country carries with it necessarily and inevitably that cheapness of collection by which the hon. Member set so great a store? From his point of view there can be no worse system of taxation than that which now prevails in the United States. I am told if you take the whole taxation internal and external of that country, they raise their enormous revenue with a smaller percentage of cost to the taxpayer than we do here in this country under our system. I do not know whether the hon. Gentleman is aware of that. If the hon. Member was aware of that fact he might have taken the House into his confidence.

MR. MOND: I did state that the total cost of the Customs collection in the United States was 1 per cent. on the total imports, and if I took that basis the cost of collection on our imports would be £5,500,000. In America there is no income-tax and the internal revenue is absolutely irrelevant.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The thing is not irrelevant at all. I believe it is true that the cost of collecting the Customs in America is slightly in excess of the cost of collecting the Customs in England—not a great deal, but fractionally in excess. But the total cost of collecting is less than in Great Britain, they do collect their enormous revenue for less cost than we do. I believe that is the fact, and at any rate nobody contradicts me. I turn to other matters. One would really suppose from the speeches of the mover and seconder of the Motion, and they are the only Gentlemen who have spoken to the question on that side of the House, that it is a preposterous, antiquated, and absurd method of raising national revenue to put a small tax on a large number of articles. Well, there are two large communities over whose policy this country has absolute control, India and Egypt, and both India and Egypt, as far as I know, raise their revenue by small duties upon imports. The hon. Gentleman talked as if it was an accepted axiom of every sound economist that you ought to pile your taxation on one or two articles, neglectful of all the collateral effects which that process may have, and that it is obviously and plainly on the face of it sound finance. It is not sound finance, it is not the finance we adopt in dealing with other countries, it is not the system which any other country has adopted. It is not the system of finance which theorists accept and it is not the system which practical men accept. When the hon. Gentleman talks as if it were axiomatic, there is a kind of insular arrogance about that, which is the more extraordinary when you reflect that the insular Government whose domestic policy he recommends, when they have to deal with Egypt and India, do not recommend the policy which he regards as clearly the only one which any reasonable man would for a moment think of adopting. Therefore, I think we may dismiss from our minds the pessimistic arguments which the hon. Gentlemen opposite have employed when they are looking forward to the time, I daresay not very distant, when there will be a great extension of the basis of taxation in this country. But there was one aspect of the question, in my opinion a more important aspect, on which nobody so far has touched at all, and that is the source from which you are going to get your revenue in the future if the needs of this country increase. I am astounded when hon. Gentlemen opposite talk of Mr. Gladstone and Sir Robert Peel and their predecessors as supporters of their view. What is their view? It is that the only scientific system of taxation which any rational man would adopt is the system of direct taxation—they would like to substitute the income-tax for indirect taxes. And the men who recommend that policy appeal to Mr. Gladstone and Sir Robert Peel as their masters in finance. They must know, even those who have taken the least trouble to acquaint themselves with the history of this topic, that the income-tax was adopted both by Sir Robert Peel and by Mr. Gladstone as a temporary expedient for reconstituting and remodelling the system of import duties in the country. They would have regarded with horror and indignation the hon. Members for Cheshire, Preston, and Gloucester. The hon. Member for Gloucester gave us a most amazing version of Peel's great Budget of 1842. I have always understood that that Budget was regarded as one of the greatest triumphs of a great financier. That is not the view of the hon. Member for Gloucester. The hon. Member says it was the failure of that Budget which converted Sir Robert Peel and Mr. Gladstone to free trade.

MR. J. M. ROBERTSON (Northumberland, Tyneside): It was the failure of the tariff of 1842.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: My point is that it has always been claimed by those who, from the point of view of hon. Gentlemen opposite, have surveyed with approving eyes the fiscal policy of this country for the past hundred years that the Budgets of 1842 and 1843 were great Budgets. Now we are told it was the failure of the Budgets that made Peel and Gladstone free traders. But that is by way of parenthesis. The argument with which I am concerned is that the great masters of finance in this country have never held the view which has been put forward to-night in all its nakedness by the mover of the Amendment and the hon. Member for Preston and, I think, the hon. Member for Gloucester. They would like to substitute direct taxation for indirect taxation over the whole area of national finance. Who contradicts that? The mover of the Resolution and the hon. Member for Preston would like to see direct instead of indirect taxation. That they say, is the only sound and scientific system of taxation. I say that that doctrine would have horrified Sir Robert Peel and Mr. Gladstone, and it is a matter of common notoriety that not only did Mr. Gladstone object to the income-tax being made a permanent part of the fiscal system of the country but he appealed to the electorate in 1875—unsuccessfully indeed—to return him to power because the one positive plank of constructive policy in his programme was the abolition of the income-tax. Now, I understand, the Party who profess to have inherited Mr. Gladstone's system of finance regard the income-tax, not as an expedient for putting indirect taxation on a sound basis, but as a permanent and necessary part of the finances of the country; which, indeed, I am afraid we must regard it in view of the present state of national expenditure, as the only proper means by which revenue is to be raised. They support that view by saying that it is the bounden duty of every Chancellor of the Exchequer to make the taxpayer feel the full weight of the burden he is imposing upon him. That is not a theory which has been invented to-night for the first time. I have always thought it the most absurd financial theory ever advanced by responsible persons. At all events, if I were Chancellor of the Exchequer, I should like to impose taxation in such a way that nobody would ever know they were paying any at all. If I were fortunate enough to attain that consummation I believe I should be the most popular Chancellor of the Exchequer that this country has ever produced. [An HON. MEMBER: What would you tax?] When you talk of the burden of taxation on individuals you ought to mean what the individuals suffer in paying taxation. If I could prevent individuals feeling it at all I should feel that I had taken away the whole of the burden, because it is what we feel in this matter, and any other doctrine to me seems purely speculative and devised for the purpose of compelling unwilling colleagues to give up expenditure which they may think necessary in their several departments. Let the House consider what the financial position of the country is, so far as we can guess it before the Chancellor of the Exchequer's statement. We have got 1s. on the income-tax, a very heavy duty on sugar, which hon. Gentlemen opposite are pledged to reduce, enormous taxation on tobacco and on tea, and you have got expenditure which is obviously going to rise and rise enormously in the next few years. If you count up your commitments in regard to the Army, Navy, and various branches of the civil service, quite irrespective of old-age pensions, a financial prospect is before you which might make any Chancellor of the Exchequer uncomfortable. You have beyond all that pledged yourselves to some beginning of old-age pensions which is admittedly only a beginning, and which, therefore, is going to carry with it new commitments of great extent falling not on this Budget but on future Budgets. It is impossible to meet these claims out of existing sources of taxation unless you raise the taxes either upon your imports, your income, or your death duties. It would be perfect madness to raise the taxes on any of those things. You would be seriously crippling industry; you would be inflicting a great injury on every class of the community, and I believe you will be driven whether you like it or not to widen the basis of your taxation. What is the use of the hon. Gentleman coming down to the House and getting his friends to vote in a great majority that they will not increase the burden of taxation when it is perfectly manifest to everybody that you will either increase your income-tax to a point which destroys it as an instrument to meet a case of public emergency, which promotes evasion, which will leave a feeling of hardship in the class specially affected, and will have all the ill effects of which every financier to whom you appeal laid the greatest stress in their Budgets, or increase the sugar duty, or the tea duty, or the death duties, which is a way of diminishing the capital assets of the country? It is madness to look to these sources for any considerable increase in your revenue, and if you do not look to those sources, the only sources you can look to are that increase of Customs duties which I advocate on financial grounds, and financial grounds alone, but which I frankly admit I should welcome, and doubly welcome, if they offered me, or any Government with which I am connected, a chance of making those arrangements with our Colonies to which I personally look forward as a great source of strength to the Empire. Putting that consideration altogether aside, as perhaps we ought to put it aside on a night when finance, and finance alone, is occupying our attention—quite apart from that, such arrangements will most unquestionably and on free trade grounds increase the manufacturing powers of this country, its market beyond the seas outside these narrow shores to a degree great now, yearly increasing, and of which no man can see the end. Sir, it is in the power of hon. Gentlemen opposite, if they retain the confidence of the country, to prevent any of these collateral consequences of broadening the basis of taxation; but I believe it is neither in their power nor in the power of any Government of this country, in view of the enormous financial responsibilities we have already begun, which are daily growing, whatever their view may be of our relations with the Colonies, to adhere to that system, fitted, indeed, and well fitted to our needs two or three generations ago, at a time when we considered the income-tax as a temporary incident of our fiscal system, but utterly unfitted to a period when more and more is daily being claimed by the community of the Government at its head, and when more and more is daily asked from this House to carry on those great social reforms to which every party is committed, which every party desires to carry through, but which nobody with the smallest knowledge of the practicabilities open to us can imagine can be carried through on the financial basis on which we are now working.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. RUNCIMAN, Dewsbury): I do not complain for one moment of the fact that I have only six minutes in which to address the House on so large a subject, for it is seldom that we have the pleasure of hearing the right hon. Gentleman make a speech so momentous, so full of commitments, as we have heard to-night. I gather that the right hon. Gentleman has committed himself to a general tariff.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I certainly have committed myself to a very wide increase in the basis of taxation, but that is all. [MINISTERIAL cries of "Oh."]

MR. RUNCIMAN: The right hon. Gentleman then has committed himself to a very wide increase in the basis of taxation. That, however, is another way of transposing or paraphrasing the phrase "a general tariff." He has committed himself also to the principle of taxation which is based upon colonial preference. I think I might add that not one single Member of the Party opposite, so far as I can gather, views this plunge with any disapproval, and the right hon. Gentleman does not contradict what I say. ["Oh, oh."] I am sure no one knows better than the right hon. Gentleman himself to what he has committed himself. He has committed himself, through Colonial preference, to food taxes; and when the right hon. Gentleman commits himself to Colonial preference, which involves food taxes, and when he says he wishes to widen the basis of taxation, he means he wishes to have taxes on more articles of food, and not on less. I notice that the right hon. Gentleman, in the course of his speech, made some reference to the fact that he had in times past watched with anxiety the introduction of the thin end of the wedge. Well, on this question he watched with similar anxiety the introduction of the thin end of the wedge, but he has himself now gone as far as any front bencher whom I see opposite, and I need hardly say that we on this side of the House view that final step of his with the utmost satisfaction. We know now exactly where we are. [Cries of "Peckham."] Well, I turn in the few moments left to me to one or two considerations dealing with the Exchequer, for let the House remember that this Motion really is an Exchequer Motion. It deals with the principles of sound finance. In the very forefront of the Resolution is the statement that any departure from our free-trade finance would be unsound. I venture to say that if the right hon. Gentleman ever introduces a tariff, if he ever extends the basis of taxation, which he is now pledged to do, he will find, first of all, that his tariff becomes unproductive, secondly, that it becomes costly to the Exchequer, and, thirdly, that it becomes immensely costly to the consumer; and—what is more than that—he will find that he has tied his hands, and that in future he will not be free to frame any tariff that he thinks fit. If we only had a tax for one year it would immediately create a vested interest. If we had it for five years or ten years you would find that the whole machinery of a great industry was used in every election all over the country—in every constituency, in every town, and in every village—in order to bolster up that particular trade or industry. I will ask the House to compare what has happened in England with what has happened in Germany. During the last two years, while we have been in power, we have adhered strictly to free trade. ["Oh, oh."] Our free-trade finance has proved sufficient for all the needs of our time, and when the right hon. Gentleman asks how are we going to deal with the future, I can assure him that so far as our projects for the future are concerned, we will finance them without any departure from free trade. In Germany during that very period they have seen their revenue from indirect taxation go down, and they have ended in the last year with a deficit of £6,000,000, they have absolutely suspended the redemption of debt, and they have had to follow the example of our predecessors in office, and to pay a pretty good deal of current expenditure out of loan money. If we compare that with the experience of the United Kingdom during the last two years, I think we have reason to say that free-trade finance has stood the strain which has been placed upon it, and that we have no reason whatever for departing from our principles.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 280; Noes, 91. (Division List No. 62.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Adkins, W. Ryland D.
Alden, Percy
Allen, A. Acland (Christchurch)
Allen, Charles P. (Stroud)
Armitage, R.
Astbury, John Meir
Baker, Sir John (Portsmouth)

Baker, Joseph A. (Finsbury, E.
Balfour, Robert (Lanark)
Baring, Godfrey (Isle of Wight)
Barker, John
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Barnard, E. B.
Barnes, G. N.
Barry, Redmond J. (Tyrone, N.)
Beale, W. P.
Beauchamp, E.
Beck, A. Cecil
Bell, Richard
Benn, Sir J. Williams (Devonp'rt
Benn, W. (T'w'r Hamlets, S. Geo.
Bennett, E. N.
Black, Arthur W.
Boulton, A. C .F.
Bowerman, C. W.
Brace, William
Bramsdon, T. A.
Branch, James
Bright, J. A.
Brocklehurst, W. B.
Bryce, J. Annan
Buckmaster, Stanley O.
Burt, Rt. Hon. Thomas
Byles, William Pollard
Cameron, Robert
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Causton, Rt Hn. Richard Knight
Cawley, Sir Frederick
Chance, Frederick William
Channing, Sir Francis Allston
Cherry, Rt. Hon. R. R.
Churchill, Rt. Hon. Winston S.
Cleland, J. W.
Clough, William
Clynes, J. R.
Cobbold, Felix Thornley
Collins, Stephen (Lambeth)
Collins, Sir Wm. J. (S. Pancras, W
Corbett, C H (Sussex, E. Grinst'd
Cory, Sir Clifford John
Cotton, Sir H. J. S.
Cowan, W. H.
Cox, Harold
Cremer, Sir William Randal
Crooks, William
Crosfield, A. H.
Crossley, William J.
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, Ellis William (Eifion)
Davies, Timothy (Fulham)
Davies, W. Howell (Bristol, S.)
Dickinson, W. H. (St. Pancras, N
Dillon, John
Duckworth, James
Duffy, William J.
Duncan, C. (Barrow-in-Furness
Duncan, J. H. (York, Otley)
Dunne, Major E. Martin (Walsall
Edwards, Clement (Denbigh)
Edwards, Sir Francis (Radnor)
Elibank, Master of
Essex, R. W.
Esslemont, George Birnie
Everett, R. Lacey
Fenwick, Charles
Ferens, T. R.
Ffrench, Peter
Fiennes, Hon. Eustace
Findlay, Alexander

Flavin, Michael Joseph
Fuller, John Michael F.
Fullerton, Hugh
Gibb, James (Harrow)
Gill, A. H.
Gladstone, Rt. Hn Herbert John
Glen-Coats, Sir T. (Renfrew, W.)
Glover, Thomas
Gooch, George Peabody (Bath)
Greenwood, G. (Peterborough)
Grey, Rt. Hon. Sir Edward
Griffith, Ellis J.
Gulland, John W.
Gurdon, Rt Hn Sir W. Brampton
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Hall, Frederick
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Lewis
Hardy, George A. (Suffolk)
Harmsworth, Cecil B. (Worc'r)
Harmsworth, R. L (Caithn'ss-sh
Harvey, W. E. (Derbyshire, N. E.
Haslam, James (Derbyshire)
Haslam, Lewis (Monmouth)
Haworth, Arthur A.
Hazel, Dr. A. E.
Healy, Timothy Michael
Hedges, A. Paget
Hemmerde, Edward George
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Henderson, J. M. (Aberdeen, W.)
Henry, Charles S.
Higham, John Sharp
Hodge, John
Hogan, Michael
Holland, Sir William Henry
Holt, Richard Durning
Hope, W. Bateman (Somerset, N
Horniman, Emslie John
Hudson, Walter
Hutton, Alfred Eddison
Hyde, Clarendon
Illingworth, Percy H.
Isaacs, Rufus Daniel
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Johnson, W. (Nuneaton)
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jowett, F. W.
Joyce, Michael
Kekewich, Sir George
Kelley, George D.
Kilbride, Denis
King, Alfred John (Knutsford)
Laidlaw, Robert
Lamb, Edmund G. (Leominster
Lambert, George
Lamont, Norman
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese, Sir Joseph F. (Accrington
Lehmann, R. C.
Lever, A. Levy (Essex, Harwich
Lever, W. H. (Cheshire, Wirral)
Levy, Sir Maurice
Lloyd-George, Rt. Hon. David
Lough, Thomas
Lupton, Arnold
Lyell, Charles Henry
Macdonald, J. R. (Leicester)
Macdonald, J. M. (Falkirk B'ghs
Mackarness, Frederic C.
Maclean, Donald
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift

MacVeagh, Jeremiah (Down, S.
MacVeigh, Charles (Donegal, E.)
M'Callum, John M.
M'Crae, George
M'Killop, W.
M'Laren, Sir C. B. (Leicester)
M'Micking, Major G.
Maddison, Frederick
Mallet, Charles E.
Manfield, Harry (Northants)
Marks, G. Croydon (Launceston)
Marnham, F. J.
Mason, A. E. W. (Coventry)
Massie, J.
Menzies, Walter
Micklem, Nathaniel
Mond, A.
Money, L. G. Chiozza
Montagu, E. S.
Mooney, J. J.
Morgan, G. Hay (Cornwall)
Morrell, Philip
Morse, L. L.
Morton, Alpheus Cleophas
Muldoon, John
Murnaghan, George
Murphy, John (Kerry, East)
Myer, Horatio
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Napier, T. B.
Newnes, F. (Notts, Bassetlaw)
Newnes, Sir George (Swansea)
Nolan, Joseph
Norman, Sir Henry
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Grady, J.
Parker, James (Halifax)
Partington, Oswald
Pearson, W. H. M. (Suffolk, Eye
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Phillips, John (Longford, S.)
Pollard, Dr.
Price, C. E. (Edinb'gh, Central)
Priestley, W. E. B. (Bradford, E.)
Radford, G. H.
Raphael, Herbert H.
Rea, Russell (Gloucester)
Rea, Walter Russell (Scarboro'
Rees, J. D.
Rendall, Athelstan
Richards, Thomas (W. Monm'th
Richards, T. F. (Wolverh'mpt'n
Richardson, A.
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roberts, Charles H. (Lincoln)
Roberts, G. H. (Norwich)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robertson, Sir G. Scott (Bradf'rd
Robertson, J. M. (Tyneside)
Robinson, S.
Roche, John (Galway, East)
Roe, Sir Thomas
Rogers, F. E. Newman
Rowlands, J.
Runciman, Walter
Russell, T. W.
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Schwann, Sir C. E. (Manchester)
Scott, A. H. (Ashton under Lyne

Sears, J. E.
Seaverns, J. H.
Seddon, J.
Seely, Colonel
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Rt. Hon. T. (Hawick B.)
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Silcock, Thomas Ball
Simon, John Allsebrook
Smyth, Thomas F. (Leitrim, S.)
Soares, Ernest J.
Spicer, Sir Albert
Stanley, Hn. A. Lyulph (Chesh.)
Stewart-Smith, D. (Kendal)
Straus, B. S. (Mile End)
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Stuart, James (Sunderland)
Summerbell, T.
Taylor, John W. (Durham)
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Tennant, H. J. (Berwickshire)
Thomas, Sir A. (Glamorgan, E.
Thomas, David Alfred (Merthyr)
Thomasson, Franklin
Tomkinson, James
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Verney, F. W.
Villiers, Ernest Amherst
Wadsworth, J.
Waldron, Laurence Ambrose
Walsh, Stephen
Walters, John Tudor
Ward, W. Dudley (Southampt'n
Wardle, George J.
Waring, Walter
Wason, Rt. Hn. E (Clackmannan
Waterlow, D. S.
Watt, Henry A.
Wedgwood, Josiah C.
White, Sir George (Norfolk)
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whitley, John Henry (Halifax)
Wiles, Thomas
Wilkie, Alexander
Williams, Llewelyn (Carmarth'n
Wills, Arthur Walters
Wilson, J. H. (Middlesbrough)
Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh. N.)
Wilson, P. W. (St. Pancras, S.)
Wilson, W. T. (Westhoughton)
Winfrey, R.
Wood, T. M'Kinnon
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Whiteley and Mr. Herbert Lewis.

NOES.

Anson, Sir William Reynell
Anstruther-Gray, Major
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt. Hn. Sir H.
Balcarres, Lord
Baldwin, Stanley
Balfour, Rt Hn. A. J. (City Lond.)
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Baring, Capt. Hn. G (Winchester
Barrie, H. T. (Londonderry, N.)
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bridgeman, W. Clive
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Butcher, Samuel Henry
Campbell, Rt. Hon. J. H. M.
Carlile, E. Hildred
Cave, George
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord John P. Joicey-
Chamberlain, Rt Hn. J. A (Worc.
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Clark, George Smith
Clive, Percy Archer
Coates, E. Feetham (Lewisham)
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Collings, Rt. Hn. J. (Birmingh'm
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Courthope, G. Loyd
Craig, Charles Curtis (Antrim, S.
Craik, Sir Henry
Doughty, Sir George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Du Cros, Arthur Philip
Faber, George Denison (York)
Faber, Capt. W. V. (Hants, W.
Fardell, Sir T. George
Fell, Arthur
Fetherstonhaugh, Godfrey
Fletcher, J. S.
Gretton, John
Guinness, Walter Edward
Haddock, George B.
Hamilton, Marquess of
Hardy, Laurence (Kent, Ashf'rd
Harris, Frederick Leverton
Harrison-Broadley, H. B.
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Helmsley, Viscount
Hill, Sir Clement
Hills, J. W.
Houston, Robert Paterson
Hunt, Rowland
Kennaway, Rt. Hn. Sir John H.
Keswick, William
Lane-Fox, G. R.
Law, Andrew Bonar (Dulwich)
Lee, Arthur H. (Hants, Fareham
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Sir Francis William
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
MacCaw, William J. MacGeagh
M'Arthur, Charles
M'Calmont, Colonel James
Mason, James F. (Windsor)
Meysey-Thompson, E. C.
Moore, William
Morpeth, Viscount
Muntz, Sir Philip A.
Nicholson, Wm. G. (Petersfield)
Nield, Herbert
Parkes, Ebenezer
Pease, Herbert Pike (Darlington
Percy, Earl
Randles, Sir John Scurrah
Rawlinson, John Frederick Peel
Remnant, James Farquharson
Roberts, S. (Sheffield, Ecclesall)
Ronaldshay, Earl of
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Salter, Arthur Clavell
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Sheffield, Sir Berkeley George D.
Starkey, John R.
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Thomson, W. Mitchell- (Lanark)
Walker, Col. W. H. (Lancashire)
Warde, Col. C. E. (Kent, Mid)
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Winterton, Earl
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Forster.

Resolved, That, in the opinion of this House, any attempt to broaden the basis of taxation by placing small import duties on a large number of articles is opposed to all principles of sound finance, wasteful and uneconomical as regards collection, disturbing and harmful to industry and commerce, would tend to raise the price of all the taxed articles to consumers, and, in practice, would lead to the imposition of high tariffs of the same character as those in force in protected countries.

Adjourned at a Quarter after Eleven o'clock.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Wednesday, 1st April, 1908.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Honourable Artillery Company.—Petition of the Honourable Artillery Company, under their Common Seal, praying for leave to bring in a Bill to appoint special trustees in regard to certain land and premises of the Honourable Artillery Company, and for other purposes, together with a copy of the proposed Bill annexed thereto; read, and referred to the Examiners.

Cardiff Railway Bill [H.L.]; Argentine North Eastern Railway Bill [H.L.]; St. Marylebone Borough Council (Superannuation) Bill [H.L.].—Reported, with Amendments.

Conway and Colwyn Bay Joint Water Board Bill.—Read 2ª, and committed: The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

Derby Gas Bill.—Read 2ª, and committed.

Stockport Corporation Bill.—Read 2ª, and committed: The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

Pontypridd Water Bill [H.L.].—Read 3ª, and passed, and sent to the Commons.

Aire and Calder Navigation Bill [H.L.]; Great Northern, Piccadilly, and Brompton Railway Bill [H.L.]; Metropolitan District Railway Bill [H.L.]; Rochester Bridge Bill [H.L.]; Stratford-upon-Avon, Towcester, and Midland Junction Railway, Evesham, Redditch, and Stratford-upon-Avon Junction Railway, and East and West Junction Railway (Amalgamation) Bill [H.L.]; Barry Railway Bill [H.L.]; Monmouthshire County Council Bill [H.L.]; Stockport Corporation Bill.—Report from the Committee of Selection, That the following Lords be proposed to the House to form the Select Committee for the consideration of the said Bills; (viz.):—

M. Anglesey,
E. Hardwicke,
L. Dunboyne,
L. Seaton,
L. Newton (*Chairman*);

agreed to; and the said Lords appointed accordingly: The Committee to meet on Tuesday, 12th May next, at Eleven o'clock; and all petitions referred to the Committee, with leave to the petitioners praying to be heard by counsel against the Bills to be heard as desired, as also counsel for the Bills.

Bristol Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Bristol Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Keighley Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Wath-upon-Dearne Urban District Council Gas Bill [H.L.]; Ravensthorpe Urban District Council Bill [H.L.]; Rhymney and Aber Valleys Gas and Water Bill [H.L.]; Leith Burgh Bill [H.L.]; Ammanford Urban District Council Water Bill [H.L.]; Llanelly and Burry Port Water Board Bill [H.L.]; Conway and Colwyn Bay Joint Water Board Bill—Report from the Committee of Selection, That the following Lords be proposed to the House to form the Select Committee for the consideration of the said Bills, viz.:—

E. Carnwath,
E. Verulam,
E. Liverpool,
V. Hill,
L. Ludlow (*Chairman*);

agreed to; and the said Lords appointed accordingly. The Committee to meet on Tuesday, the 12th of May next, at Eleven o'clock; and all petitions referred to the Committee, with leave to the petitioners praying to be heard by counsel against the Bills to be heard as desired, as also counsel for the Bills.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

TRADE REPORTS: ANNUAL SERIES.

No. 3965. Venezuela (Ciudad Bolivar).

No. 3966. Russia.

POLICE (SCOTLAND).

Fiftieth Annual Report of His Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary for Scotland, for the year ended 31st December, 1907.

CROFTERS HOLDINGS (SCOTLAND) ACTS, 1886–1887.

Report by the Crofters Commission, for the year ended 31st December, 1907.

Presented (by command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

JOURNAL COMMITTEE.

Report from, that the One hundred and thirty-ninth Volume of the Journals (7th and 8th Edward VII., 1907–1908), with an Index, was ready for delivery; read, and ordered to lie on the Table; and the said Volume ordered to be delivered in the same manner as the preceding Volumes of the Journal have been delivered.

NEW BILL.

COMPANIES CONSOLIDATION BILL [H.L.].

A Bill to consolidate the Companies Act, 1862, and the Acts amending it—Was presented by the Lord Granard (*E. Granard*); read 1ª, and to be printed. (No. 44.)

MOVABLE DWELLINGS BILL [H.L.].

[SECOND READING].

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

LORD CLIFFORD OF CHUDLEIGH: My Lords, this Bill deals with a subject to deal with which several attempts have been made. The leading principles of the Bill are few, and, at first sight, I think, almost incontrovertible. The first of those principles is that it is inequitable that movable dwellings should be entirely outside the sanitary, social, and educational laws which govern stationary buildings; and the second is that, as far as possible, each movable dwelling should have some one authority which should be responsible for its compliance with the regulations. The Bill has been carefully restricted to dwellings which are in their nature movable, or which are, in point of fact, generally in the habit of being moved about. A building which, for any lengthened time, is in one particular spot might very safely be left to be dealt with by the sanitary and educational machinery which at present exists.

I will touch briefly on the history of this legislation. In 1877 an Act was passed for regulating boats that ply up and down the canals, and it is upon that measure that the present Bill is modelled. In 1885 there was a Royal Commission on the Housing of the Working Classes, and that Commission dealt with the subject as it is dealt with in this Bill. The Commission recommended that—

> "The local authorities should be given jurisdiction over dwellings of this class by means of the extension of their power by statute to all habitations, and the powers given in Section 23 of the Public Health Act (drainage) should be extended to any hut or tent and to any cart used for sleeping which remains for more than two nights within 200 yards of the same spot. The recommendations of your Majesty's Commissioners are made for the benefit of the neighbourhood in which van towns are situated as well as in the interests of the settlers themselves."

An Act for the Housing of the Working Classes was passed in 1885, and, among other provisions, there is one very excellent provision from the sanitary point of view from which great good was expected, but which we have every reason to suppose has, in a great many instances, been singularly inoperative, for reasons which I will shortly point out. Section 9 of the Housing of the Working Classes Act, 1885, provides that—

> "9. (1) A tent, van, shed, or similar structure used for human habitation, which is in such a state as to be a nuisance or injurious to health; (*a*) or which is so overcrowded as to be injurious to the health of the inmates whether or not members of the same family, shall be deemed to be a nuisance within the meaning of Section ninety-one of the Public Health Act, 1875; and the provisions of that Act shall apply accordingly; (*b*) (2) A sanitary authority may make bye-laws (*c*) for promoting cleanliness in, and the habitable condition of, tents, vans, sheds, and similar structures used for human habitation, and for preventing the spread of infectious disease by the persons inhabiting the same, and generally for the prevention of nuisances in connection with the same (*d*)."

The difficulty that arises is this, that when these wanderers infringe the bye-laws of a local authority and their attention is called to the fact, they adopt the simple expedient of moving into the area of another local authority where they wait until again detected in their malpractices. It would, therefore, seem to be necessary that there should be some one authority to which these dwellings should belong, an authority which could make regulations for them and enforce those regulations, by taking away, if necessary, the certificate in right of which they move about the country.

A Committee of the House of Commons sat upon a Bill introduced in another place in 1887, and Sir Hugh Owen, who was appearing for the Local Government Board, said—

> "I think it is very likely that before the summons was served the van would be outside the jurisdiction of the justices."

That is practically what, in practice, is found generally to happen. Another difficulty which has arisen is that it is impossible to expect a van dweller to be acquainted with the multiplicity of bye-laws. Giving evidence before the same Committee, Sir Hugh Owen said—

> "It would be unbearable that a man who can pass within ten minutes out of one district into another should be subject to varying provisions of bye-laws."

The Bill of 1887 was not proceeded with. With regard to bye-laws, the Local Government Board have rightly objected to sanction varying bye-laws for various districts. Sir Hugh Owen told the Committee in 1887 that up to that time the only bye-laws to which the Local Government Board had given their assent were those of Battersea, and I do not think many have been sanctioned since. Middlesex, however, a couple of years ago obtained a provision in a private Act which enabled them to deal with movable dwellings. The effect of that Clause is that where a movable dwelling is occupying land within fifty yards of a public highway or dwelling, so as to cause injury to the residents or to be a nuisance, or dangerous, or injurious to health, the local authority may complain, and the council may make an Order; but an exception was made in favour of vans frequenting fairs.

I now come to the Bill before your Lordships. Clause 1 has for its object, first, the registration of all movable dwellings, and this registration is committed to counties and county boroughs. The object of restricting the registration authorities to these two bodies is that they are, as a rule, the educational authorities of the district. They are not too numerous, and therefore, we avoid the difficulty which I mentioned a moment ago of a great multiplicity of regulations. They also cover fairly large areas. Clause 2 provides for the making of regulations for the registration of movable dwellings, for the lettering, marking, and numbering of such dwellings, and for registering the number, age, and sex of the persons who may be allowed to use a movable dwelling as a place of abode, having regard to cubic space, ventilation, provision for the separation of the sexes, and general healthiness and convenience of accommodation. I might remark here that I admit there is no necessity for those regulations being so stringent in their nature as in the case of permanent dwellings in towns; for instance, regulations with regard to cubic space which are eminently suited to lodging houses may be somewhat too stringent when applied to a van in the open air. The clause also enables regulations to be made for promoting cleanliness in and providing for the habitable condition of movable dwellings, and for preventing nuisances, fire, and the spread of infectious disease. Clause 3 defines the registration authority, and Clause 4 deals with the certificate of registry. Clause 5 is somewhat on the lines of that in the Middlesex Act. It provides that—

> "Where it appears to the registration authority that the encampment of occupiers of movable dwellings on any specified place or places within their area would be dangerous to the public health, or constitute a nuisance to the neighbourhood, the registration authority may by bye-law prohibit such encampment on such specified place or places; and any person acting in contravention of any bye-law made under this section shall be guilty of an offence under this Act."

This clause goes, perhaps, a little further than the principles I have enunciated, because it deals not only with vans halting on common land but with movable dwellings on private land or on land leased or hired; and it seems to me that this is reasonable on the analogy of the building bye-laws and other sanitary provisions, which are equally applicable to the owners of private and public lands.

Clause 6 provides for the making of regulations with a view to enforcing the law relating to school attendance in the case of children resident in movable dwellings. This is a clause on which, I think, great stress ought to be laid, for I am informed that in many instances these children almost entirely evade the Education Acts. It is not so much that the machinery which at present exists is insufficient to deal with these abuses, as that the inhabitants of these dwellings are able to evade supervision altogether owing to the control of movable dwellings being assigned to no one authority. Another difficulty, of course, is that the education bye-laws differ in various districts, and there is also a very strong objection to these children being admitted casually. If, however, they were under some one authority that authority would be able to insist on these people making provision for the education of their children, and if they failed they would be able to enforce their authority by withdrawing the certificate upon which depended the movability of the dwelling. In subsection (2) of Clause 6 there is a provision that it shall not be deemed to be a reasonable excuse that there is not within three miles of the movable dwelling a public elementary school. The reason for that, of course, is that it would be very easy for the owner of a movable dwelling to halt on some distant moor far from any school, and so entirely evade the Act. Clause 7 applies statutory provisions relating to legal proceedings and the forgery of certificates. Clause 8 provides that—

> "It shall be the duty of the sanitary authority having jurisdiction in the place where a movable dwelling is for the time being situate to assist the registration authority in carrying out the objects of this Act by giving information and otherwise."

There is a clause in the Government's Children Bill which appears rather to touch upon this point—Clause 107; but it seems to me to be directed to the sending of truant children to industrial schools and rather supposes them to be tramping about with people with no regular occupation and no regular dwelling. I submit that this falls very far short of what we are aiming at—namely, that there shall be one authority responsible for the proper education of these children. If, however, the Government think that these educational clauses had better be left until we come to consider the Children Bill, I should not object. The definition clause leaves out temporary dwellings such as dwellings for hop-pickers and others, because they are not in the habit of being moved to any very great distance, and can be easily dealt with by the local authority in whose area they are placed. In conclusion, I have only to say that I am far from not having sympathy with those who live an open-air life; but I confess I can see no reason why, in matters of education and sanitation, they should not be subject to the same social regulation as others.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^{a}."—(*Lord Clifford of Chudleigh.*)

VISCOUNT CROSS: My Lords, I think the House ought to be greatly indebted to my noble friend for bringing forward this Bill. I had a great deal to do with the provisions dealing with children in canal boats in the year 1877, and I had the honour of serving on the Royal Commission in 1885 to which the noble Lord alluded. I can assure your Lordships that there is a real grievance which requires a remedy. When these people infringe the bye-laws of a local authority and are attempted to be dealt with, they move out of the jurisdiction of that authority and are consequently very difficult to get at. Without committing myself to the actual wording of the clauses, some of which, I think, will require considerable amendment, I hope that, on the whole, the Bill will commend itself to the favourable consideration of His Majesty's Government. The point as to whether the education clauses should be maintained in this Bill or inserted in the Children Bill is one on which I care nothing, so long as these provisions are enacted. I know tha there is a real evil to be dealt with, and I trust that the Bill will be read a second time.

LORD FARRER: My Lords, I rise to support the Bill. I happen to live in the County of Surrey, where this grievance is assuming proportions of enormous magnitude. I can remember the commons of Surrey being entirely free from vans and gipsies. One-tenth of that county is common land, and it is of enormous importance to keep the lungs of London free. Whereas it was formerly possible to enjoy those commons, they are now infested with tramps and gipsies of very description. The Census of 1901 showed that there were 634 persons sleeping in these vans on the night of the Census, and there were a very large number of tramps and nomads. These people pay no rates, no education is provided for their children, and the honest cottager who lives on the land detests these people in a way that would probably surprise your Lordships.

We all have some sympathy for the picker-up of unconsidered trifles, but the old-fashioned gipsies are rapidly dying out, and the commons of Surrey are now infested with tramps and nomads to such an extent that a real and serious evil exists. One day last summer I found, on a marsh close to where I live, sixteen vans, with thirty-two children of school age who were attending no school at all and were being brought up in a most miserable condition. Two Sundays ago I was walking on the downs between Dorking and Guildford, and found twelve families camping there with about seventeen barefooted children in an almost savage condition. Last year alone there were three confinements in vans on Leith Hill Common, and at a recent meeting of the Dorking Board of Guardians attention was called to the terrible conditions under which medical men had to attend these cases. No satisfactory or decent preparation was made, and it was declared that the only satisfactory solution of the question lay in fresh legislation. Under the law as it stands sanitary authorities are quite powerless to deal with the evil.

The education authorities are also powerless to deal with these children. I was informed by a county councillor that the reason for a great number of gipsies infesting a particular common was that the schools in the neighbourhood were quite full, and they knew they could not in those circumstances be compelled to send their children. An attempt was made in another case at Reigate to get the police to interfere, but the chief constable replied—

> "I beg to acknowledge your letter relative to the existence of contagious skin disease which you consider was probably introduced by the gipsies in the neighbourhood. This appears to be a matter to which the sanitary authorities should give attention. Only the Lord of the Manor can remove gipsies from waste land. I cannot instruct the police to remove them. I am sorry I cannot help you.

We are, therefore, powerless to deal with this matter under the present law, and I sincerely hope the Bill now before your Lordships will be accepted. I might add that we have managed to get rid of some of these people through the great powers which the Thames Conservancy possess. They have power, under their Act, to deal with all the watersheds of the Thames and it is extremely important that the water supply of London should be kept pure and clean. I hope your Lordships will give the Bill a Second Reading.

EARL RUSSELL: My Lords, I have been rather surprised at the approval with which this Bill has been received. There is a tendency to too much registration and too much lettering and numbering in the Bill, and I think the reasons which have just been given apply not so much to this particular Bill as to some method for abolishing these vans and gipsies altogether, because there is nothing in the Bill which would prevent the greater part of the evils referred to by the noble Lord who had just sat down. As long as vans and tents are registered, they will be still permitted. Of course, I recognise that there is a good deal to be said for the children obtaining the necessary education, although, on the other hand, I am not at all sure that any great harm would be done to them if a considerable portion of their youth were spent on open commons instead of in public elementary schools. If your Lordships will look at Clause 14 you will see that the definition of the expression "movable dwelling" includes more than insanitary and overcrowded gipsy vans. It includes—

> "Tents and other structures capable of being moved from place to place."

So that boating parties on the Thames who took with them tents which they could erect on places where camping was allowed would be required to have their tents registered and numbered, and would have to receive a certificate as to the number, age, and sex of the persons who could use them. That seems to me to be carrying interference with people camping out in the summer farther than is necessary. It was, and, so far as I know, still is a habit for people sometimes to spend a portion of the summer in caravans and dwellings which are pulled about by horses—people who keep the interior of those dwellings in a very habitable condition. It is true that it will not be any very great nuisance to them to observe the provisions of this Bill, but it seems to me an unnecessary interference with persons who are doing no harm. Indeed, the effect of this Bill will be to create a large number of offences out of acts which are at present perfectly innocent. Persons who combined together to enjoy a trip through the country in a caravan or went up the river in order to camp out on the banks would apparently come within the scope of the provisions, and in my view this would be carrying registration further than is necessary. The Bill will need amendment in Committee so as not to cause unnecessary inconvenience. It would, I think, be very simple to give some control over both the education of the children and the sanitary provisions of the dwellings without requiring all these elaborate precautions as to registration and cetificates. I do not know how the certificate is intended to work as to the number, age, and sex of the persons using the dwelling. Suppose four undergraduates go for a trip in a caravan. Would the licence in that case be for four men? If a man took his wife for a trip would he have to get a different licence, and another later on if he took his sister with him? I submit that the Bill interferes far more than is necessary to secure the purpose of the promoters. But the root objection appears to be to the class of nomads as nomads. That is a natural objection on the part of those who are not nomads. But this Bill does nothing to do away with them; it will only harass them, and it will harass them to a greater extent than is needed for attaining the objects which are stated to be those for which the Bill is promoted.

*LORD ALLENDALE: My Lords, I have no doubt that the general objects aimed at in the Bill evoke the sympathy of your Lordships, but I am doubtful whether the provisions are altogether workable and will secure the desired object. The Local Government Board, however, have no wish to oppose the Bill at this stage. A Bill with a similar object was introduced in the House of Commons in 1889, but a greal deal of opposition was aroused on the part of showmen and others of the van-dwelling fraternity, and the Bill did not make progress. Movable dwellings have also been the subject of legislation. Section 9 of the Housing of the Working Classes Act, 1885, applies the provisions of the Public Health Act, with respect to nuisances to tents, vans, and similar structures used for human habitation, that are in such a state as to be dangerous or injurious to health. Urban and rural district councils have already powers to make bye-laws for promoting cleanliness in, and the habitable condition of, such structures, and for preventing nuisances and the spread of infectious disease in connection with them; and the Local Government Board have from time to time framed a series of model clauses for the use of councils who wish to make such bye-laws. Then there is the Infectious Diseases (Notification) Act of 1889, which applies to van and tent dwellers in the cases of infectious disease.

This Bill seems to be the result of views held in some quarters, and notably, I believe, by the County Councils Association, who passed a Resolution last year in favour of legislation on the subject, existing provisions being insufficient. In regard to regulations, this Bill appears to follow the lines of the Canal Boat Act. Canal boats are a special type of dwelling, and, from the very nature of the case, are restricted to the waterways of the country. It is obvious, therefore, that they can be much more easily registered and controlled than movable dwellings such as have been described to your Lordships to-day. It does not follow that a system of registration applicable to canal boats is necessarily applicable to vans, and much less so to tents. If we only had vans to deal with, they might, perhaps, be made capable of registration and supervision; gipsies not only use vans but cleverly-constructed tents, which are suitable for their purpose, but which it would be almost impossible to register; and if it were made illegal to occupy these, large numbers of gipsies and other persons connected with travelling shows, would have to cease their present form of existence. Perhaps some of your Lordships—and I think we had an indication of that in the speech of Lord Farrer—would not regret that, but it has not been part of the general public policy of the country hitherto, and if this policy were to be adopted, I think it would be better that it should be done by a more direct enactment.

As I have said, the provisions of the Bill with regard to registration are not quite appropriate to structures such as have been referred to, and when the Bill goes into Committee it will need a good deal of amendment in that respect. The definition clause, to which reference has been made, will also require amendment. The Local Government Board consider that the scope of the regulations which the Board would be called upon to make under Clause 2 is much wider than is desirable. As drafted, the Bill would appear to include tents used by people who prefer to camp out in the summer by the river and elsewhere, whom it would be difficult to register. As to general sanitary control, Section 9 of the Housing of the Working Classes Act, 1885, authorises urban and rural district councils to make bye-laws as to cleanliness, the habitable condition of the dwellings, and the prevention of nuisances generally; and bye-laws made by 179 authorities have been sanctioned by the Local Government Board. The Board consider that some of the matters comprised in Clause 2 would be very difficult to deal with—such, for instance, as the separation of the sexes and the prevention of fire. The Local Government Board are disposed to think that Section 9 of the Act of 1885 goes as far as is reasonably practicable in controlling movable dwellings, and that if general regulations as distinguished from local bye-laws are needed, it would be better to make general regulations under that section than to proceed as proposed by Clause 4 of this Bill.

Clauses 6 and 7 have reference to the question of education, which would be more properly dealt with by my noble friend the Lord President of the Council; but I may, perhaps, observe that this matter will no doubt receive consideration in connection with the Children Bill which is being discussed in another place to-day. As to Clause 8, which makes it the duty of the sanitary authority to assist in carrying out the object of the Bill, there does not seem to be any objection; but Clause 9, authorising county and borough councils to make bye-laws to prohibit encampments in specified places, will certainly require amendment. So also will Clauses 10 and 11, especially if the earlier clauses to which I have alluded are amended. While in the opinion of the Local Government Board the Bill goes rather further than seems desirable, the Government nevertheless are not prepared to offer any objections to the Second Reading, but hope a reasonable time will be allowed to elapse before the Committee stage, when the Government will themselves propose Amendments.

LORD BELPER: My Lords, I am very glad to hear that the noble Lord who represents the Local Government Board, although somewhat critical in his speech as regards the details of the Bill, will offer no opposition to the Second Reading. I should not have thought it necessary to make any remarks after the full account which was given of the provision of the Bill by my noble friend Lord Clifford in moving the Second Reading; but I should like to mention that the Bill has been promoted by the County Councils Association in consequence of the very serious representations which have been made, not only by the county to which my noble friend Lord Farrer referred, the county of Surrey, in which there are a very large number of these movable dwellings, but by a large number of other counties in England. The noble Lord who spoke on behalf of His Majesty's Government referred us to a great many clauses which are supposed to be of some value in regulating movable dwellings. But as a matter of fact the difficulty is that the moment a sanitary authority or any authority steps in and tries to exercise jurisdiction, the people immediately move their vans or tents to a neighbourhood where the authorities are not so active. We want to prevent these scandals in some way. I do not know what the Local Government Board intend to propose; but unless there is, I will not say some form of registration as that seems to be objected to, but, at all events, some means whereby you can lay your hand on these people and prevent them evading the law, no legislation will be effective. Without that the provisions of this Act, if it passes into law, will be just as useless as the provisions referred to by Lord Allendale. In the county of Surrey alone there is a very large population living in movable dwellings—I think between 1,500 and 2,000; and of the 340 children only forty are attending school. That is a serious state of things, and one to which I think we have a right to ask the Government to assist us in putting a stop. I have not the least objection to the criticisms which have been made, because they were all criticisms of the drafting. As long as the principle is admitted we shall be only too glad to meet the Government in regard to the details. As to the penalties in the Bill, let me say that if you are going to enforce the law you must have penalties. It is necessary on moral, educational, and sanitary grounds to get control over these people in some way, and I hope that when we get into Committee a serious attempt will be made to enable those councils who wish to deal with these people to enforce education on the children and to regulate the sanitary arrangements.

*THE LORD ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY: My Lords, I am glad that the noble Lord who has just spoken on behalf of the county councils should have given a little further stimulus to attention being devoted to this matter than would have been afforded by the rather luke-warm support extended to the Bill on behalf of His Majesty's Government. I am perfectly certain that this is a matter which requires very urgent attention, not merely on sanitary, but on moral and educational grounds. It was my duty, all the time I was Bishop of Winchester, to deal with this subject in connection with the migratory folk living in the New Forest and the similar nomads who frequent the commons in the county of Surrey. The problem is an exceedingly baffling and difficult one, and for that reason it is apt to be left to solve itself. The evil is increasing; there are more dwellers of a vagrant type living as permanent campers-out than was the case some years ago. That is the case, not mainly in the sparsely populated parts, but in the regions where the ordinary population is increasing. The explanation I suggest is that some of these movable dwellers are not entirely free from a predatory inclination, and they are happier where there are houses and people than where they are far removed from human habitation. I am particularly apprehensive lest the question of the children should be found to suffer by falling between two stools. This question lies on the margin both of the Children Bill now before the other House and of the Bill now brought before your Lordships; and those charged with the one Bill may be apt in each case to throw off the responsibility on those charged with the other. I hope the question is not going to be treated as of comparatively small importance. It is one which eminently deserves the kind of consideration which this Bill endeavours to give to it. Some of the clauses appear to me to be better calculated to do their work than the critics suppose, and I hope the matter will continue to receive the attention of your Lordships.

*THE LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (The Earl of CREWE): My Lords, the most rev. Primate and the noble Lord opposite both seemed to think that my noble friend who answered for the Government had thrown a certain degree of cold water on the Bill; but so far as he did, they, I think, supplied good reasons, for they both admitted the really exceptional difficulty of the subject; and when a subject of this kind is a very difficult one, it is necessary for those in charge of the Government Department which will have to administer any measure which may be passed to point out the difficulties which beset its administration if it becomes law. The real difficulty of the subject is—I think it has appeared from the speeches made in the course of the debate—that there is a considerable number of people who would like practically to prohibit the existence of this nomadic population altogether. We often pass these people on the roads, and we look at them with interest, not always, I am bound to say, without a certain degree of envy; and when the conditions under which they live, as regards sanitation and other matters, are spoken of, I think it is only fair to compare them, not with people who live in comfortable houses under good sanitary conditions, but with those who live in the slums of the towns—people of the same class and who lead the kind of existence which these people would have to lead if they were confined to urban areas. I do not know that I need say anything more on the general question.

As regards the education clauses of the Bill, there are one or two words I should like to say in order to point out the very great difficulty which surrounds the subject. As matters now stand, except in the case of the children of canal boatmen, whose position is a different one from that of these nomadic children, for canal boats go on regular journeys, whereas these people wander about from county to county—except in the case of the children of canal boatmen there are no special regulations which enable school attendance to be specially enforced. By the Education Acts as they stand, if a child is found habitually wandering, a school attendance order can be made in his case, and no reasonable excuse, as it is called, can be produced in such a case; but it is very doubtful if that provision was ever intended to apply to people who live in movable dwellings. It was rather intended to apply to children who wander about with tramps. In any case, however, the practical difficulty is that the attendance order can only be made in respect of a particular school, and it is perfectly obvious that if a child is going to be made to attend a particular school the dwelling then ceases to be a movable one and the whole position is changed. Therefore, the fact has been that it is not the law which is in fault; but it is practically impossible to enforce the law so long as children are allowed to travel about in these dwellings. If you are prepared to go so far as to prohibit children of school age travelling in this way, you may solve the question after a fashion; but I am not at all sure that public opinion would support a proposal of that kind. That is one of the points which no doubt can be carefully considered when the Bill is being examined more closely in Committee.

Clause 6 of the Bill provides that the Board of Education shall make regulations with a view to enforcing the law relating to school attendance in the case of children resident in movable dwellings, and they have to designate the local authority whose duty it shall be to enforce the regulations of the Board. They might thus provide for the giving of certificates of due attendance in the case of children who were unable to ettend regularly at any one public elementary school. This sort of school attendance, however—one day at one school and another day at another school—is one which arouses the utmost indignation in the minds of school managers and school teachers, and if you are really going to enforce it, I am afraid you will find yourselves in a practical difficulty. The clause says that the Board of Education is to designate the local authority whose duty it should be to enforce the regulations of the Board. That means, I suppose, the local education authority, because clearly the Board of Education can only deal with educational authorities. But how is the local education authority going to enforce the regulations when the parents, being *ex hypothesi* in movable dwellings, have left that area? That is a difficulty which I do not see the Bill will meet. There are various other minor criticisms which I might make with regard to these education clauses, but they are more suitable for consideration in Committee.

On the other hand it is the case that to a certain extent my hon. friend Mr. Herbert Samuel, in another place, is trying to deal with this matter in the

Children Bill. I think it is worthy of consideration whether the whole discussion on the question should not be postponed until the Children Bill comes up, or, if the noble Lord prefers it, whether these particular clauses should not be omitted for the time, leaving the whole question to be discussed on the Children Bill. I am bound to say that, notwithstanding the fact that the Government are trying to deal with the matter in that measure, I am not, for the reasons I have stated, very hopeful that a solution will be arrived at, so far as the educational part of the matter is concerned. But we shall do our best. We feel that the wrong done to the children from an educational point of view is in many cases a considerable one. I rather sympathise with what Lord Russell said as to the preferable condition of children living a great part of their time in the open air to that of some children who lead more regular lives; but we feel that the educational question is one which we ought to try to meet. We are, however, impressed by the extreme difficulty of it, and I cannot, personally, confess to being very confident that it is capable of a satisfactory solution.

Lord CLIFFORD of CHUDLEIGH: My Lords, I quite agree with the noble Earl the Lord President that if you allow these children to wander about they must attend school spasmodically, and that to that the school managers and teachers have a strong objection as the instruction is necessarily of an inferior kind. But if you insist upon their attending school regularly they cannot wander about. To that restriction, however, the noble Earl thinks public opinion would not agree. It appears to me that the only alternative is to let them wander and not attend school, and why this should be permitted to persons living in movable dwellings when everyone else is obliged to send his children to school I cannot conceive. I imagine that the education authority would, under the rules, be empowered to require from these people some return as to where their children were being educated, and to oblige them to give a notification when they were leaving the area of that authority as to the authority into whose area they were moving. The local education authority would then communicate with the authority into whose area they were moving so that the regulations with regard to the children could be enforced. The only outcome of it would be that these people would be obliged to make some provision for the education of their children while they were wandering about the country. I cannot think that the alternative foreshadowed, that these children should be allowed to wander about without any education at all, is an admissible one. On many of the points on which the clauses have been criticised I hold no very great objection to emendations. I shall be most willing to accept anything which will make the Bill a more workable measure, and I will certainly consult the noble Lord who represents the Local Government Board before I take any further steps with regard to the Bill.

Lord STANLEY of ALDERLEY: My Lords, I should like to say a word with regard to the attendance of these children at school. Nobody can contend that they are wandering. The parents may be, but the children are under the control of their parents and do not come within the same category as children found wandering. I had many years experience of the entire failure to give effect to the Act relating to canal boat children. It is no use having a boat or a van registered in a place as long as you allow the children to travel about with their parents. In those circumstances the ordinary regulations for enforcing attendance are useless, and I do not think any ingenuity will enable you to make them effective. The canal boats had to be registered at their ports of departure, and in London they were mostly registered at Paddington; but we were unable to do anything in practice to carry out the Act owing to the impossibility of enforcing it. You could, of course, prohibit a parent from taking his child about in such a way as to render it impossible for the child to receive education. That would mean that the child would have to be deposited with a friend or boarded-out, while the parents tramped the country. But I think there would be considerable difficulty in bringing that about. Something could be done to enforce attendance if you had a provision in the Education Act to the effect that parents could be furnished with a book which would show the schools the child had attended during the wanderings, and the attendances made. Of course, if the book were falsified and false entries made, that would have to be an offence, and if at the end of the year the parent, on applying for a renewal of his licence, showed an imperfectly filled book that might be made an offence also, and a severe penalty might be imposed if no steps at all had been taken in the education of the child. I am not going to say whether that would be good or not; but the ordinary machinery of bye-laws and the ordinary discharge of their duties by local education authorities would be insufficient to cope with these cases. Take the West Riding. It would be too much to expect that tramps could be tracked from one end of that county to the other; there is no machinery in a county for following them. I do not say that what I suggest is a good thing to do, but I think clauses might be devised which would make it extremely disagreeable for a wandering parent to have done nothing for the education of his child.

*THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: My Lords, whatever we may think as to the somewhat intricate problems to which this Bill gives rise. I hope we shall not hesitate to give it a Second Reading this afternoon. By doing so we commit ourselves only to the principle of the Bill, and the principle of the Bill is, I conceive, this, that we do not desire that persons who adopt a nomadic mode of life should thereby emancipate themselves from the laws and regulations to which other members of the community are subject, whether those laws have reference to sanitary matters or to the education of the children concerned, or to other matters. I hope, therefore, we shall read the Bill a second time. With regard to the manner in which it might be dealt with further on, I would venture to suggest that my noble friend would do well to confer with the representative of the Local Government Board and consider with him what course would be best. I should be rather sorry, speaking for myself, if the further examination of this Bill were to stand over until the moment, which we cannot at present anticipate, when the Bill now before the House of Commons will reach your Lordships' House.

On Question, Bill read 2ª, and committed to a Committee of the whole House.

PATENTS AND DESIGNS BILL [H.L.].

Read 3ª (according to order), and passed, and sent to the Commons.

MUNICIPAL REPRESENTATION BILL [H.L.].

Amendments reported (according to order); and Bill to be read 3ª To-morrow.

LOTTERIES AND INDECENT ADVERTISEMENTS.

The Lords following were named of the Committee—

L. Steward (*E. Beauchamp*).	V. Llandaff.
V. Hutchinson (*E. Donoughmore*).	L. Ramsay (*E. Dalhousie*).
	L. Herschell.

Ordered, That such Committee have power to agree with the Committee of the House of Commons in the appointment of a Chairman.

Then a Message was ordered to be sent to the House of Commons to propose that the Joint Committee do meet in the Chairman of Committees' Committee Room on Tuesday next, at Three o'clock.

ARMY (ANNUAL) BILL.

House in Committee (according to order); Bill reported without Amendment; Standing Committee negatived, and Bill to be read 3ª To-morrow.

NAVAL REPAIRS.

LORD ELLENBOROUGH: My Lords, I rise to ask His Majesty's Government if they will grant a Return of the amount of money spent during the last two years on the repairs of each battleship and first class cruiser launched since 1st January, 1898, separately, divided under the following headings—(1) Repairs of boilers, engines, and other machinery used in the propulsion of the ship; (2) Repairs to armament, including all gun-mountings, torpedoes, and machinery connected with them; (3) Alterations in design, such as making cooling chambers, fresh ventilators, or supplying and fitting new apparatus of any description; also a Return of the number of days that our battleships and first class cruisers launched since 1st January, 1898, have been unavailable while undergoing repair during the last two years; and in addition to these Returns, for purposes of comparison, if the information is obtainable, a Return of the number of days that twenty or thirty of the best-known liners in our mercantile marine have been unavailable for the same reason during the last two years; and lastly, the weight allowed for indicated horse-power for all the vessels named in the above Return.

The Earl of CREWE: My Lords, my noble friend the First Lord of the Admiralty has been called away on an engagement connected with his Department, and he has, therefore, asked me to make the reply which he would have given to the noble and gallant Lord's Question. He says that he is anxious to give the noble Lord as much of the Return asked for as is possible, but he cannot give it exactly in the form in which it is asked for by the noble Lord My noble friend assents to Paragraph 1, but he is only able to give the figures for 1905–1906, and 1906–1907, those for 1907–1908 not yet being available. As regards Paragraph 2, my noble friend says that the form in which the ordnance accounts of the Admiralty are framed differs from that of the dockyard accounts and for service reasons he does not feel justified in giving information with regard to repairs to armament. He will be happy to give the information requested in Paragraph 3.

Lord ELLENBOROUGH: What about Paragraph 1?

The Earl of CREWE: My noble friend agrees to that, with limitations. He cannot agree to No. 2, but he agrees to No. 3. As regards the last paragraph, my noble friend says he can give the information asked for if the noble Lord thinks it very desirable—that is to say, if the noble Lord really presses for it—but it will involve a very large amount of research which my noble friend, if possible, would like to spare his staff, whom he considers very much overworked. My noble friend does not know how he could obtain the details with regard to the length of time that the great liners mentioned in the Question are kept under repair from time to time, and he considers that it is against the interests of the service that the weight allowed for indicated horse-power should be publicly disclosed. My noble friend has asked me to say that even the modified amount of information which he is able to give will take some little time to produce.

Lord ELLENBOROUGH: I am sorry to give the officials at the Admiralty additional trouble, but the Admiralty have been greatly attacked on the subject of repairs, sometimes justly and sometimes unjustly, and if these figures were given it might set the matter at rest. Therefore, I press for the details as to the number of days on which vessels were undergoing repairs. My reason for asking for the weight allowed for indicated horse-power, was that I believe the Admiralty, as a rule, have not allowed sufficient weight for indicated horse-power, and that is the reason why such a large proportion of our ships are kept under repair.

TERRITORIAL ARMY ADMINISTRATION.

***Lord HARRIS**: My Lords, I rise to ask His Majesty's Government whether they will consider the possibility of amending the new Regulations for the Territorial Army in the case of those regiments the recruiting areas of which lie in more than one county, with a view to alleviating the extreme inconvenience to which such regiments are put This question refers to very few regiments, but they feel that they are suffering under a considerable grievance. The scheme of the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War is that the Territorial regiments in a county should be brought under the County Association, and it is conceivable that the administration of their affairs will be no more complicated than they were under the War Office. But there are a few regiments in the extraordinary and unfortunate position of being under four or five counties, and those of your Lordships who have had experience of communicating with Government Departments will, I am sure, realise the confusion that will be caused thereby, for these unfortunate regiments will have to apply in all matters of finance, administration, etc., to each of these County Associations. Finding it difficult to deal with the cases of those regiments which recruit over several counties the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State has apparently left it to the regiments and to the County Associations themselves to get out of the difficulty as best they can. I suggest that it is the business of the War Office to get the regiments out of this dilemma, and that it would not be difficult for the War Office to devise a scheme by which the colonels of such regiments might have to do with only one authority. I may add that this is not a personal grievance of my own. I have been asked to put the Question on behalf of another commanding officer.

THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (The Earl of PORTSMOUTH): My Lords, I regret that the noble Lord has not informed me what are the particular cases to which he refers.

***LORD HARRIS:** They are perfectly well-known. The Marquess of Tullibardine's regiment, for instance, recruits over four or five counties.

THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH: I understood the Question to refer to another matter—namely, the condition of those counties which practically adjoin London. Some men domiciled in Kent, Surrey, and Essex will, no doubt, want to join the London regiments, but I am afraid we cannot depart from the general principle established in the Act, that the county of which the Lord-Lieutenant should be the head should be the recruiting area for the different County Associations. No doubt in the neighbourhood of London some difficulties may arise, but these we trust will be overcome by the mutual good feeling of the Associations, whom, in matters of this kind, we expect to be able to come to some arrangement

***LORD HARRIS:** I regret that my Question has been misunderstood. The cases I refer to are those of regiments coming under various counties for administration. Perhaps the noble Earl will look into that point.

THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH: I now see what is in the mind of the noble Lord, and will inquire into it.

TERRITORIAL ARTILLERY.

THE EARL OF ERROLL: My Lords, I rise to ask the Under-Secretary of State for War what is the estimated cost of the 196 batteries it is proposed to raise for the Territorial Army, supposing the ranks are all full, including the hire of the horses for fifteen days training, cost of gun sheds, harness, ammunition for practice, and generally for the administration and training of the artillery; also the proportion due for the expenses of the County Associations; and whether he can also state the whole annual cost of a battery of Regular field artillery on the higher and lower establishment respectively. I understand that there will be a debate on Monday, initiated by Lord Denbigh, into the whole question of the Territorial artillery, and I cannot help thinking that it will be of great advantage to your Lordships that we should possess the information for which I am asking before that debate takes place. The noble and gallant Field-Marshal, Lord Roberts, told us the other day that imperfectly trained artillery were absolutely useless in war and liable to become a danger. After that statement from so high an authority it would be only prudent to consider whether it would not be preferable to have a smaller number of Regular and very highly trained artillery in the place of a larger number of imperfectly trained gunners. It is an acknowledged principle on the Continent of Europe that the less trained the infantry the more important it is that the artillery should be very highly trained. I have put down the Question as to the cost of a Regular battery because I think it is important that we should have some idea how the cost compares with that of a Territorial battery, with a view to seeing whether we cannot secure fewer highly trained Regular artillery for the same price that we should get this larger number of less perfectly trained Territorial artillery.

THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH: My Lords, as we shall be debating the general question of the artillery on Monday, I hope my noble friend will excuse me from entering into the various matters to which he has referred in putting his Question. I am glad to be able to give him the information for which he asks, subject to one or two reservations. The total number of batteries to be raised is 182, not 196 as stated in the Question. I do not know exactly how my noble friend arrived at the number of 196, but I think it is possibly a miscalculation arising from reckoning three batteries instead of two to a brigade of howitzers. The number of field and howitzer batteries to be raised for the Territorial Force is 148, the annual cost of which will be about £350,000, which includes the expenses of the County Associations. I am afraid I cannot give the noble Earl any accurate estimate as to the proportion due for the expenses of the Associations, as the Associations administer other units. The other batteries to be raised are fourteen horse, and twenty heavy batteries. The grants for these cover their ammunition columns and are not comparable with the figures for batteries of field artillery. As to the Question whether I can also state the whole annual cost of a battery of regular field artillery on the higher and lower establishments, respectively, I have to say that the annual cost of a Regular field battery on the higher establishment of 163, all ranks, is £15,000, and on the lower establishment of 132, all ranks, £12,000.

THE EARL OF DONOUGHMORE: Is any allowance made in the £350,000 for the cost of arming the batteries originally, or is that what they are going to cost when they are a going concern?

THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH: That will be the annual cost when they are a going concern.

House adjourned at ten minutes past Six o'clock, till To-morrow, a quarter past Four o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Wednesday, 1st April, 1908.

The House met at a quarter before Three of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Dartford Gas Bill,—As amended, considered; to be read the third time.

Dublin and Central Ireland Electric Power Bill.—Reported. [Preamble not proved].

Report to lie upon the Table.

PRIVATE BILLS (GROUP D).

MR. LUKE WHITE reported from the Committee on Group D of Private Bills; That, for the convenience of parties, the Committee had adjourned till Monday next, at half-past Eleven of the clock.

Report to lie upon the Table.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to alter the constitution of the Ashton-under-Lyne, Stalybridge, and Dukinfield (District) Waterworks Joint Committee, and to make the Audenshaw Urban District Council a combining authority; and to make further and better provision with regard to the improvement, health, local government, and finance of the urban district of Audenshaw; and for other purposes." [Audenshaw Urban District Council Bill [Lords].

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to empower the Corporation of Merthyr Tydfil to construct street works and to provide recreation grounds; and to make further and better provision with regard to the health, improvement, and good government of the borough; and for other purposes." [Merthyr Tydfil Corporation Bill [Lords].

Also, a Bill, intituled "An Act to authorise the Llanelly Gaslight Company to raise additional capital; and for other purposes." [Llanelly Gas Bill [Lords].

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to confer further powers upon the Taff Vale Railway Company with respect to their Penarth Harbour and Dock undertaking; and for other purposes." [Taff Vale Railway Bill [Lords].

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to empower the Fishguard and Rosslare Railways and Harbours Company to construct harbour works at Fishguard in substitution for certain authorised harbour works and railways in connection therewith; and for other purposes." [Fishguard and Rosslare Railways and Harbours Bill [Lords].

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to authorise the Urban District Council of Skegness to purchase the undertaking of the Skegness Water Company; and to make further and better provisions in regard to the health, local government, and improvement of the district; and for other purposes." [Skegness Urban District Council Bill [Lords].

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to provide for the transfer of the undertaking of the Ocean Marine Insurance Company Limited, to the North British and Mercantile Insurance Company; to increase the capital of, and to amend the Acts relating to the latter Company; and for other purposes." [North British and Mercantile Insurance Company Bill [Lords].

And, also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to confer further powers upon the Pontypridd Waterworks Company; and for other purposes." [Pontypridd Water Bill [Lords].

Audenshaw Urban District Council Bill [Lords]; Merthyr Tydfil Corporation Bill [Lords]; Llanelly Gas Bill [Lords]; Taff Vale Railway Bill [Lords]; Fishguard and Rosslare Railways and Harbours Bill [Lords]; Skegness Urban District Council Bill [Lords]; North British and Mercantile Insurance Company Bill [Lords]; Pontypridd Water Bill [Lords].—Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

PETITIONS.

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL.

Petitions in favour: From Glamorgan; and Wednesbury; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSED PREMISES (EXCLUSION OF CHILDREN).

Petitions for legislation: From London; and Staincliffe; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSING BILL.

Petitions against: From Bath; Bradford (three); Chard, Yeovil and other places; Coate; Devizes; Elsecar; Essex; Hoyland (two); Newhill; Tilshead; Tonbridge; Wath-on-Dearne (four); West Lavington; West Melton (nine); Wickwar; and Winchester; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSING BILL.

Petitions in favour: From Aberdare; Aberdeen; Ashton under Lyne; Aspatria; Bodmin; Bolton; Brighouse; Carlisle; Dudley; Dundee; Eccles (two); Elstree; Glamorgan; Gosforth on Tyne; Great Yarmouth; Halifax (four); Hampstead; Ilford; Kidderminster; Lachford; Lewannick; Merthyr Tydfil (four); Middleton; Mountcorrel; Nottingham; Oakenshaw (two); Padiham; Paisley (two); Palmer's Ville; Patricroft (four); Pendleton; Pontypool; Radcliffe; Royton; Scotswood; Seaton Burn; Sheffield; Shrewsbury; Southport; South Wigston; Sowerby; Truro; Wallsend; Wednesbury; Willom; Willington Quay; and Winton; to lie upon the Table.

LIQUOR TRAFFIC (LOCAL OPTION) (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Eaglesfield, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

MORAY FIRTH (ILLEGAL TRAWLING).

Petition from Cromarty, for prevention; to lie upon the Table.

PUBLIC TRUSTEE.

Petition from London and other places, for inquiry; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY BILL.

Petitions in favour: From Daventry; and Worksop; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

Copies presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 3965 and 3966 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

POLICE (SCOTLAND).

Copy presented, of Fiftieth Annual Report of His Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary for Scotland for the year ended 31st December, 1907 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

CROFTERS' HOLDINGS (SCOTLAND) ACTS

Copy presented, of Report of the Crofters' Commission for the year 1907 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Post Office Telephones.

MR. HUDSON (Newcastle-on-Tyne): To ask the Postmaster-General, whether he is prepared to make any statement as to the future policy of the Post Office on the subject of telephone rates, and especially in regard to the financial basis on which he proposes that the Post Office telephone system should be conducted.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton*). I am glad to have an opportunity of stating my views on the question of the future policy of the Post Office in regard to telephone rates. I consider that the Post Office telephone system should be conducted on a sound business basis, that is to say, that the revenue should be sufficient to provide for current expenditure of all kinds, for the maintenance and adequate renewal of plant, and for interest at 3 per cent. on capital expenditure, together with a moderate but not excessive margin of profit. In order to ascertain whether the rates are fixed at a level sufficient to satisfy these conditions, and to put the telephone service on a business footing, it is necessary that there should be a clear separation between the revenue and expenditure of the telephone service and the revenue and expenditure of other branches of the Post Office, especially the telegraphs. It is in this way alone that the telephone system can be made to stand on its own basis, unaffected by the profit and loss made on other Post Office services. The various branches of Post Office work are, in practice, frequently conducted in the same building, sometimes by means of the same plant and under the supervision of the same persons. The separation of the cost is consequently a matter of some difficulty. Last autumn, therefore, I appointed an expert committee, including the President of the Institute of Chartered Accountants, to investigate this question and to advise me as to the best method to be adopted for separating the accounts. The committee has not yet finished its work; but, as a first result of their investigation, the Estimates for 1908–9 have been presented to the House in such a manner as to separate the expenditure on telegraphs and telephones, and the telephone revenue will be shown separately. The new telephone rates must to some extent be regarded as experimental. Longer experience is renquired before it is possible to say what may be the permanent cost of operating a fully developed system, or to ascertain with any accuracy the life of the varying descriptions of telephone plant, having regard especially to probabilities of obsolescence, and the consequent necessity of replacing plant before it is worn out. Moreover, the conditions under which the Post Office service is conducted will be considerably modified when the system of the National Telephone Company is taken over by the Post Office at the beginning of 1912. Although it is not possible for me to pledge my successors, I should anticipate that the principles which I have stated above as those which should determine the rates will be accepted by them, and the rates will doubtless be from time to time modified in accordance with those principles.

Pay of Portsmouth Postmen.

Mr. BRAMSDON (Portsmouth): To ask the Postmaster-General if he will state on what grounds he has based the wages of the postmen at Portsmouth at a maximum of 27s. per week as against 26s. paid hitherto; whether similar local conditions exist at Portsmouth as at Pymouth and Devonport, where the maximum is to be 30s. per week against 26s. paid hitherto; whether he took into consideration the fact that Portsmouth has a much larger population and deals with a greater amount of local correspondence, and that, by the latest Board of Trade Returns, Portsmouth shows a higher cost of living than such towns as Cardiff, Nottingham, Sheffield, Manchester, Liverpool, Leeds, Hull, Birmingham, or Bristol, all of which are on the 30s. scale; and whether, under the circumstances mentioned, he can see his way clear to reconsider his decision in regard to Portsmouth.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton*—

	Population, 1901.
Portsmouth - -	189,122
Plymouth - - -	105,404
Devonport - - -	78,059
	183,463

The classification of Portsmouth was based on the volume of work plus the cost of living, as recommended by the Select Committee (parargraph 258). The units of work at Portsmouth number about 1,250 and place it, on work alone, in Class II., the range of which is from 800 to 1,700 units. The index number of the cost of living, as ascertained by the Board of Trade, is 105, which indicates that the cost of living at Portsmouth is not much above the normal, and the excess is not sufficient to justify the town being placed in Class I. on this account. The units of work at Plymouth and Devonport amount to 1,540, and the cost of living is exceptionally high, index number 112.

Employment of a Girl on Postal Duties at Seaton Delaval.

Mr. JAMES O'CONNOR (Wicklow, W.): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that at Seaton Delaval, Northumberland, a girl named Annie James, under sixteen years of age, is performing postmen's duties; that the wages she is receiving are 5s. a week, for which in addition she has to perform household duties for the sub-postmistress; whether he is aware that another woman in the same office signs for the money allowed by the Post Office, which is much in excess of this sum; and whether he will inquire into the matter with a view to getting the work performed by a regularly appointed servant of the Post Office.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) I find, on inquiry, that the girl named Annie James is performing a short afternoon delivery at the Seaton Delaval Sub-Post Office. She will be sixteen years of age next month. There is great difficulty in obtaining the services of men or of boys over sixteen at Seaton Delaval. Annie James is paid 4s. a week for the delivery duty. She is also a domestic servant of the sub-postmistress, who pays her 5s. a week as wages for her domestic services.

Pay of Telegraphists at Lurgan.

Mr. MOORE (Armagh, N.): To ask the Postmaster-General whether it has been decided that the Lurgan Post Office is to be placed in Class 5, according to the Hobhouse classification; whether he is aware that as a consequence Lurgan telegraphists will receive as a maximum 40s. per week, whilst the Belfast will receive 56s. per week; whether he has any figures in his possession warranting a difference of 16s. per week in the pay of men of the same grade, owing to the cost of living; and whether he will reconsider his decision.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) Lurgan was in Class 7 of the old classification for sorting clerks and telegraphists and, in accordance with the recommendations of the Select Committee in Paragraph 259, it has been placed in the new Class 5, thus raising the maximum for the male telegraphists by 2s. and of the female telegraphists 1s.

Suggested Revenue Stamp on Railway Free Passes.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer if, with a view to measuring the extent to which the free-pass system prevails on railways and steamers in the three Kingdoms, and the comparative extent of the custom, as well as to provide revenue, he would consider the expediency of requiring a penny embossed stamp to be used on all such permits with a right to refund when the pass was granted solely on company's business.

(*Answered by Mr. Asquith.*) I have no reason to suppose that the adoption of the suggestion would be productive as a source of revenue, and, as at present advised, I do not think that the statistical object which the hon. Member has in view, even if it could be obtained by that means, would justify the imposition of a stamp duty.

Management of Farms of J. Farrell and J. Heslen on the King-Harman Estate.

MR. J. PHILLIPS (Longford, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can say in what manner the farms of J. Farrell and J. Heslan, evicted tenants on the King-Harman estate, which is in Chancery, in the townland of Lisnagh, in the County of Longford, were managed during the past year, and what profit was made on them; and when the evicted tenants are likely to be restored.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The estate in question is under the control of the Chancery Division of the High Court. I am informed that during the past year the farms of the two evicted tenants named were let by the receiver for grazing at £10 per annum. It is understood that these two evicted tenants are to be restored to their holdings upon the sale of the estate generally. It is not intended to deal with the property piecemeal.

Sale of Farms on the Carmichael O'Ferrall and Belton Estates.

MR. J. P. FARRELL (Longford, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether any proposal has yet been made to the Estates Commissioners for the sale to the tenants of Corclara their farms on the Carmichael O'Ferrall or Belton estate there.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The Estates Commissioners are unable to trace any proceedings as having been instituted before them in respect of the sale of the estate mentioned in the Question.

Post Office Accommodation at Nenagh.

MR. HOGAN (Tipperary, N.): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that several petitions have been forwarded from the inhabitants of Nenagh complaining of the inadequate accommodation in the Post Office of that town; whether the replies to these complaints have invariably admitted the justice of the complaints without proposing to take any steps to remedy the evil; and whether he will now take action to provide a Post Office suitable for the business of the town and district and safe for the health of the Post Office employees.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) I am aware that several petitions have been received from Nenagh, and I have given them full consideration. I have now again considered the matter, and I am answering the latest memorial through the hon. Member.

Tuberculosis amongst Irish Elementary School Children.

MR. J. DEVLIN (Belfast, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the prevalence of tuberculosis amongst children attending the elementary schools in Ireland; whether he has any figures or reports bearing upon the subject; and whether he would consider the advisability of ordering an inquiry into this matter, with a view to taking some effective means of mitigating the consequences of the disease amongst these children.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) My attention has not been specially called to the prevalence of tuberculosis amongs school children in Ireland, but I am, of course, aware of the regrettable prevalence of the disease in the country generally, and am fully alive to the importance of dealing with the subject. The Commissioners of National Education have no statistics as to the number of children affected with tuberculosis. They inform me that they have taken what steps they may to prevent the spread of tuberculosis by the exhibition of notices in the schoolrooms calling attention to the danger of the disease. The Tuberculosis Prevention (Ireland) Bill, which is in course of preparation, will provide for the compulsory notification of the disease and will contain other provisions for dealing with the evil. In view of the proposed legislation a special inquiry into the case of the school children does not seem to be necessary.

Application for Grant to Mary Anne M'Carron.

MR. LARDNER (Monaghan, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if an application for a free grant has been received by the Estates Commissioners from Mary Anne M'Carron, an evicted tenant on the Montray estate, County Monaghan; and, if so, has an inspector been sent to inquire into the circumstances of her case.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The Estates Commissioners have received the application referred to and will consider it in due course.

Reinstatement of Evicted Tenants, County Monaghan.

MR. LARDNER: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state the number of evicted holdings in County Monaghan to which the compulsory powers contained in the Evicted Tenants Act, 1907, apply; and in how many cases do the Estates Commissioners expect to effect reinstatement of the former tenants by the exercise of these powers, and when do they propose to put them in force.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) I refer the hon. Member to my Answer to a similar Question put by the hon. Member for North-East Cork on 23rd March.

Reinstatement of Mrs. Margaret Clarke, Possextown.

MR. PATRICK WHITE (Meath, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the application of Miss Margaret Clarke, Possextown, Nobber, County Meath, to be reinstated in her former holding has been dealt with by the Estates Commissioners, and with what result.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The Estates Commissioners have received the application referred to, but the holding to which it refers is in the occupation of a tenant. The Commissioners are unable to say when they may be able to deal with the application, as the case does not come within the Evicted Tenants Act, and no proceedings for the sale of the estate on which the holding is situate have been instituted before them.

Fishguard Route for American Mails.

MR. OWEN PHILIPPS (Pembroke and Haverfordwest): To ask the Postmaster-General what would be the estimated saving in time in the transit of the mails between London and New York if the new Fishguard Harbour were used for the despatch and receipt of the American mails in lieu of Holyhead.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) I assume that the hon. Member refers to the possibility of forwarding American mails landed at Queenstown *via* Rosslare and Fishguard instead of *via* Holyhead. If the route suggested were adopted there might be some acceleration of the inward mails for London and the South although, owing to the varying conditions, the extent of the acceleration cannot be stated; but mails for Scotland and the Northern and Midland counties of England would be delayed. There would at present be no advantage in forwarding the outward mails *via* Fishguard.

Post Office Learners—Qualifications.

MR. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): To ask the Postmaster-General whether the learners in the Post Office who competed at the examination held in July last will be regarded as primarily qualified when they attain the acquirements then in force for primary qualification and in force at the time the successful candidates were taken into the public service as learners, or will they not be registered as primarily qualified until they reach the more extended qualifications laid down in the circular issued in February last.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) The hon. Member must have been misinformed. There has been no change in the prescribed qualifications for learners since the early part of 1906.

Licensing Compensation—Local Borrowings.

MR. TREVELYAN (Yorkshire, W.R., Elland): To ask the President of the Local Government Board in how many districts the licensing authorities have resorted to borrowing in order to accelerate the reduction of licences under the Act of 1904; and what amounts have been borrowed.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) I beg leave to answer this Question. If the Question relates to the borrowing by compensation authorities on the security of the compensation funds under the Licensing Act, 1904, with the consent of the Secretary of State, I would refer my hon. friend to the printed answer in which I gave on 26th February to the hon. Member for Kidderminster full details of the loans which had then been sanctioned under the Act of 1904. I have only to add that since that date one other loan has been sanctioned, viz., to the compensation authority for the county of Hertford, to the amount of £2,000, which is to be repaid out of the compensation levy imposed in the present year.

Protection of Irish Industries.

MR. FFRENCH (Wexford, S.): To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he is aware that a London magistrate imposed a heavy fine on a French firm convicted of selling a foreign article for Irish lace; if it was the Irish Industrial Development Association that instituted proceedings; and will he say if the Board of Trade can do anything in matters of this kind for the protection of Irish industries.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) The reply to the first two Questions asked by my hon. friend is in the affirmative. Under the Merchandise Marks Acts the Board of Trade have power to undertake the prosecution of offences against those Acts in cases appearing to them to affect the general interests of the country or of a section of the community or of a trade, and they are always prepared to consider. with a view to prosecution, if the circumstances should warrant it, any cases submitted to them in accordance with the prescribed regulations.

Commercial Travellers and The Bankruptcy Acts.

MR. REES (Montgomery Boroughs): To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he is aware of the disability under the present Bankruptcy Acts of commercial travellers who are paid by commission and who, in the event of the bankruptcy of the firm employing them, are entitled to rank as ordinary creditors only and to receive for any moneys which may be due to them such dividend as the estate may realise, as against the commercial traveller who is paid a salary and ranks as a preferential creditor in the event of the bankruptcy of his firm; and whether he will, in any future alteration of the Bankruptcy Law, provide that all commercial travellers, whether paid by commission or by salary, shall rank as preferential creditors.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) As I informed my hon. friend the Member for Christchurch, in answer to a similar Question addressed to me on 24th of last month, I am advised that it is doubtful whether the suggested disability exists under the present law as judicially interpreted. I will, however, carefully consider whether any amendment of the law in this matter is necessary in the event of the introduction of a Bill to amend the Bankruptcy Acts.

Foul Brood amongst Bees.

MR. LARDNER: To ask the Vice-President of the Department of Agriculture (Ireland) when he proposes to introduce his Bill to enable local authorities in Ireland to deal compulsorily with cases of foul brood among bees.

(*Answered by Mr. T. W. Russell.*) The Bill in in course of preparation.

Suggested Reconsideration of Sentence on Stoker Moody.

SIR SEYMOUR KING (Hull, Central): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether the time has arrived when the sentence passed on Stoker Moody might be again reconsidered, and a further remission of sentence granted.

(*Answered by Mr. Edmund Robertson.*) The Amiralty have decided that the case shall be brought up for review before Moody has completed two years of his sentence.

Flogging in Prisons.

MR. PATRICK WHITE: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether, when a convict is sentenced to be flogged, more than one warder has ever been employed to administer the flogging.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) As a rule only one warder is employed, but in a recent case, where four convicts had to be punished, two warders were employed.

Board of Agriculture Offices.

MR. LANE-FOX (Yorkshire, W.R., Barkston Ash): To ask the First Commissioner of Works what premises are at present occupied by the Board of Agriculture, and what are the rents which are being paid for them.

(*Answered by Mr. Harcourt.*) I beg leave to refer the hon. Member to the full Answer which I gave to a similar Question (non-oral) by the hon. Member for the Rye Division on the 24th ultimo.

Imperial Contribution to Upkeep of Highways.

MR. FFRENCH: To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, in view of the increase of steam and motor traffic on the roads, and the difficulty of district councils to bear the increasing burden, he will consider the question of making some contribution towards the upkeep of the roads.

(*Answered by Mr. Asquith.*) I do not think that this question can properly be dealt with except in connection with the relations between the Exchequer and local taxation generally, which, as the hon. Member is probably aware, are receiving the careful consideration of the Government.

Protecting Certificate for Private Collumb, late of Royal Fusiliers.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: To ask the Secretary of State for War whether in view of the fact that Private Collumb, late No. 7275, of the Royal Fusiliers, is now in hospital in New York, United States of America, suffering from a dangerous illness, and now desires to return to Ireland, the War Office will grant him a protecting certificate to cover a charge of desertion which still is against him, and thus enable him to return immediately before his state of health will prevent him from travelling.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) On 20th January a letter was received from this man's father stating that his son was in hospital in New York permanently disabled with spinal curvature and asking for a protecting certificate, the man being a deserter from the Royal Fusiliers since July, 1902. He was informed on 28th January that on receipt of a duly certified statement from the hospital authorities the issue of a protective certificate would be considered. No further communication from the father has reached the War Office.

Yeomen re-enlisting in the Territorial Army.

COLONEL IVOR PHILIPPS (Southampton): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether Yeomen whose present engagements expire after 31st March, 1908, and before the completion of this year's camp-training of their unit, may enlist in the new force for one year; if not, what is the shortest period for which such men may re-engage or enlist; if such men re-enlist in the new force will they be allowed to draw the old Yeomanry rate of pay for the 1908 training; and may the attestation of Yeomen serving in the old force and desirous of enlisting in the new force be postponed until the commencement of the annual training of their unit in order to give commanding officers an opportunity of explaining the new conditions of service to their men.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) Yeomen whose engagements were due to expire on a date subsequent to 31st March may enlist in the Territorial Force to complete such period, but if they wish to continue service on its completion they must re-engage for the period prescribed by their County Association, which will not be less than one year or more than four years, and must come under the new conditions as regards pay, etc. Any man whose term of service was due to expire after 31st March, and before the 1908 training, who, at the end of the 1907 training or subsequently before 31st March, 1908, re-engaged for a further year in accordance with Paragraph 66, Yeomanry Regulations, will be permitted to enlist in the Territorial Force to complete the term of his engagement still to run, including that further year, and will retain the old rates of pay during such period. Yeomen enrolled before 18th August, 1901, who have not since come under The Militia and Yeomanry Act, 1901, may be attested for one year as from 31st March, 1908, and retain their existing rate of pay, etc., for that period. Attestation may be postponed until 30th June, but no man will be trained until he has been attested. Men who have signified their intention of attesting, and who cannot conveniently be attested before training, may be brought to training and at once attested. They will draw no pay until they have been attested, and if they do not attest immediately on joining training they will be discharged. Men whose attestations have been deferred until after the date of expiration of their Imperial Yeomanry engagement will, if they wish to join the Territorial Force, be obliged to re-enlist for the full period of four years.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Volunteer Drill Halls.

MR. FELL (Great Yarmouth): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if, in taking over the drill halls from the Volunteers, the Public Loan Works Board will advance the money, not only to redeem the shares, but to pay the interest which may be, or is, due upon them.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. HALDANE, Haddington): No drill halls will be taken over by the Public Works Loan Commissioners. Property on which there is a mortgage held by the Commissioners will be transferred to the County Association with the mortgage. If any property on which there is a mortgage held by persons other than the Commissioners is transferred to the Association the question of transferring the mortgage to the Commissioners will be considered in the autumn. In the case of any property transferred to a County Association subject to mortgage, the interest will be paid, as it becomes due, by the County Association out of funds provided by the War Office.

EARL WINTERTON (Sussex, Horsham) was understood to ask if the right hon. Gentleman would consider the possibility of paying off all the mortgages.

MR. HALDANE said they had just paid off an enormous number of mortgages.

MR. FELL asked whether the interest due would be paid as well as the mortgages?

MR. HALDANE said that if there had been interest in arrear they had paid it off.

Military Manœuvres in the New Forest.

SIR ROBERT HOBART (Hampshire, New Forest): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War, whether he has received a communication from the Court of Verderers of the New Forest in which they state that, inasmuch as the New Forest cannot lawfully be used for military camps and manœuvres except under the provisions of the Military Manœuvres Act, 1897, they cannot take any steps for facilitating military manœuvres except under that Act; and what course he proposes to take under the circumstances.

MR. HALDANE: The War Office received a communication from the Verderers which was duly forwarded to the Office of Woods and Forests.

It is understood that my hon. friend has already received a reply from that office on the subject pointing out that the Verderers are entirely mistaken in their contention.

MR. ASHLEY (Lancashire, Blackpool) asked whether the right hon. Gentleman was aware that the Act of 1897 expressly stated that no manœuvres could take place in the New Forest without the Verderers being consulted ?

MR. HALDANE : As I have already explained, we are not conducting the manœuvres under the Manœuvres Act, but by arrangement with the Commissioners of Woods and Forests.

MR. ASHLEY asked whether, if the manœuvres were not conducted under this Act, the only remedy for any poor commoner whose property was damaged would be long and expensive litigation against the right hon. Gentleman, whereas under the Act, compensation could be received easily.

MR. HALDANE : The hon. Member is quite wrong. We conducted extensive manœuvres last summer in Scotland quite apart from the Manœuvres Act, and most friendly relations obtained between the War Office and everybody else. We paid everybody their claims, and, in addition, we took the stores we wanted from the local people, so that it was far more popular than any arbitrary manœuvres.

MR. ASHLEY asked whether the right hon. Gentleman was aware that clauses were expressly put in the Act of 1897 in order that any manœuvres in the New Forest might be carried out in accordance therewith.

MR. HALDANE said that if they were putting compulsory powers in operation, no doubt that was so ; but if they were acting on a friendly agreement with the people concerned they did not need to take that course.

MR. ASHLEY asked whether the right hon. Gentleman had come to a friendly agreement with the hon. Member for the New Forest.

MR. HALDANE said he had the greatest regard for his hon. friend the Member for the New Forest, but he was not the whole of the public.

EARL WINTERTON : No, but he is the official Verderer of the New Forest.

Irish Militia Battalions.

CAPTAIN CRAIG (Down, E.) : I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he can state the number of recruits who have joined the Special Reserves or extra Special Reserves regiments between 16th January, 1908, and 31st March, 1908, with the corresponding Return for the same period of Militia recruits for the year 1907 ; and would he further give a detailed statement in regard to the above for the Militia battalions of the Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers, the Royal Irish Rifles, and the Royal Irish Fusiliers.

*MR. HALDANE : The figures available are for the period 16th January, 1908, to 28th March, 1908, for the Special Reserve, and 14th January, 1907, to 30th March, 1907, for the Militia. The figures are as follows—

	Militia.		Special Reserve.
	Drill on Enlistment.	Preliminary Drill.	Drill on Enlistment.
Total numbers - - - -	5,599	2,418	5,354
Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers -	25	41	27
Royal Irish Rifles - - -	117	182	107
Royal Irish Fusiliers - -	32	11	28

CAPTAIN CRAIG: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether it is intended to take away recruits of the 3rd Battalion Royal Irish Rifles from Newtownards, County Down, and of the 5th Battalion of the same regiment from Downpatrick, for six months annual drill at the depot in Belfast; whether he is aware of the great difficulties which will be added to obtaining suitable country recruits if these two important centres are done away with; whether he has received any memorial from the local inhabitants of Downpatrick and Newtownards bearing on the loss which would consequently fall on the tradespeople in the two towns; whether he can say if the advice of the commanding officers of these two regiments was asked for by the War Office authorities as to the proposed change; and what was the nature of the advice they gave.

MR. HALDANE: It is intended that the recruits of these two battalions shall drill on enlistment at the depot in Belfast, so far as accommodation permits. This change has been made in consequence of the general scheme of re-organisation and experience alone can shew what effect such change can have on recruiting. The general scheme was not referred to these commanding officers for their advice. No memorials on this subject from the towns mentioned appear to have reached the War Office.

MR. T. L. CORBETT (Down, N.): May I ask if the right hon. Gentleman is aware that particularly suitable accommodation for camping grounds and rifle ranges exists round Newtownards and Downpatrick, and that it will be very difficult to obtain land near Belfast for the purpose?

MR. HALDANE: What the hon. Member says will be quite true of the annual training of the Reserve forces, but what I am speaking of is the preliminary recruit training of six months which will take place in winter, when the men do not camp out.

CAPTAIN CRAIG: May I ask whether those two ancient regiments, the 3rd Royal Irish Rifles and the 5th Royal Irish Rifles ave been taken away from their home depots without the commanding officers being in any way consulted in so important a matter?

MR. HALDANE: They have been taken away in pursuance of a general scheme which was bound to involve a good many changes in accordance with the changed nature of the training.

CAPTAIN CRAIG: Then these regiments are to be severed from all county association with Down?

MR. T. L. CORBETT: Will the right hon. Gentleman before he comes to a final decision consult the commanding officers?

MR. HALDANE: It is decided.

CAPTAIN CRAIG: This is a very important point for the whole County of Down, and it is only just known to a number of officers. May I ask whether it is too late to reconsider this matter? If the local inhabitants in Newtownards and Downpatrick present a memorial to the War Office will it be considered?

MR. HALDANE: We have gone very carefully into the matter, but there will be ample time to consider all these things as experience goes on. General Sir Neville Lyttelton, who, as Chief of the General Staff, advised us on these matters, succeeds to the chief command in Ireland to-morrow, and will take up his duties in a few days, and no one is more capable of forming an opinion on the practical necessities of the matter.

Militia Battalion Colours.

LORD J. JOICEY-CECIL (Lincolnshire, Stamford): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he can see his way to authorising the payment of the same allowances for railway travelling, etc., to the officers of a disbanded battalion of Militia, who attended the parade for handing over the colours to the Lord-Lieutenant, as they would have received on joining their battalion for annual training and dismissal from training.

MR. HALDANE: The same regulated expenses within the county as are granted to the escort for the colours of a Regular unit under Paragraph 1769 of the King's Regulations will be allowed for a similar escort for handing over the colours of a disbanded Militia unit.

Port-of-Spain Public Auctions.

MR. SUMMERBELL (Sunderland): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies if he is yet in a position to give the Report of the Governor of Trinidad in regard to the selling by public auction of properties, land, etc., by the town board of Port-of-Spain for repairs to pipes, etc., of the town properties.

THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. CHURCHILL, Manchester, N.W.): No, Sir; there has not yet been time for such a Report to have been received in response to the Secretary of State's request.

Trinidad Immigration Ordinance.

MR. SUMMERBELL: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies if he can state the terms of the amended Immigration Ordinance recently passed in Trinidad and Tobago; whether any change will ensue as to the wage paid to the free labourer; if so, what is the amount; whether any change is made as to the wage paid to the indentured immigrant; if so, what is the amount; and further, as to whether the Select Committee that went into the matter of the Immigration Ordinance found that the indentured man had not been getting the minimum wage agreed upon as a general rule.

MR. CHURCHILL: The Ordinance in question provides that, in the computation of the average rate of wages payable for task work performed by indentured labourers, there shall be taken into account the value of free quarters for and medical attendance on such labourers, upon such scale as may be fixed by the Governor in Council. The object of this Ordinance is to admit of the payment of increased wages to the unindentured labourers. It is impossible to state at present what the increase will amount to, but it is estimated that the value of the medical attendance and free quarters varies from 11 to 18 cents a day. No change has been made in the minimum money wage payable to the indentured labourer. The Answer to the last part of the hon. Member's Question is in the negative.

Persian Customs Service.

MR. WEDGWOOD (Newcastle-under-Lyme): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the important posts in the Persian customs service are held at present by Belgian subjects, and in particular are the chief Customs officers at Bandar Abbas and at other Gulf ports Belgians; and if so, will His Majesty's Government use their influence with the Persian Government to induce them to give Englishmen the preference in any such appointments or reappointments within the British sphere of influence in Persia.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. RUNCIMAN, Dewsbury; for Sir EDWARD GREY): The employees of the Persian Customs Service are Belgian subjects. His Majesty's Government do not propose to make any suggestion to the Persian Government calculated to disturb existing arrangements unnecessarily.

MR. WEDGWOOD: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he has any official information showing that the Persian Government contemplate replacing the Belgians now in the Persian Customs Service by Germans; and whether His Majesty's Government are prepared to sanction the institution of officials of German nationality in the ports or cities within the British sphere of influence in Persia.

MR. RUNCIMAN: No such information has been received. My right hon. friend is informed that the German Government do not desire any change in the nationality of the employees.

Castle Morton School-house.

MR. ESSEX (Gloucestershire, Cirencester): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the occasional licence granted at the Upton-on-Severn Petty Sessions on 6th February was merely an extension of time upon the premises of the Feathers Inn, Castle Morton, or was granted to the licensee of the Feathers Inn for the sale of intoxicants in the Church of England schoolhouse at Castle Morton, Worcestershire, during a Primrose League and smoking concert on 24th February; what is the population of this village, and how many licences for the sale of intoxicants exist there; and do the facts of the case call for action by the Home Office, and, if so, what.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. GLADSTONE, Leeds, W.): I have made inquiries into this case and am informed that the licence in question authorised in accordance with the Acts in that behalf the licensee of the "Plume of Feathers" Inn to sell intoxicating liquor at the Castle Morton Schoolroom between 7 and 10 p.m. on 24th February. The population of the parish, which, I understand, can hardly be called a village is 795, scattered over 3,701 acres. There are five licensed premises in the parish, viz., the "Plume of Feathers" Inn and four beer-houses small and set wide apart; not one of these premises has accommodation for smoking concerts on similar gatherings. I find nothing to call for any action on my part.

VISCOUNT HELMSLEY (Yorkshire, N.R., Thirsk): In view of the fact that the facts stated in a Question on this subject last Monday were incorrectly stated, *i.e.*, it being said the vicar was in the chair, whereas he was not, will the right hon. Gentleman withdraw the insinuation which was then made by a member of the Government?

MR. GLADSTONE: I am prepared to answer my own Questions, but I cannot undertake to answer for colleagues.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): Is it in order in one Question to make reference to a Question previously asked in the House? I always understood it was out of order.

*MR. SPEAKER: If the hon. Member says it is out of order I have no doubt it is.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: I accept the compliment, Sir.

Hillsborough Mill Fatality.

MR. H. J. TENNANT (Berwickshire): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the death of Charles Ernest Gash, aged fifteen, at Hillsborough, through being crushed in the rolling mills of Messrs. Manoah King and Company; whether the firm had been warned to fence the machinery and couplings of rolls more than once, and had omitted to carry out the instructions of the inspector; and whether he proposes to take any action in the matter.

MR. GLADSTONE: I have made inquiry and find that the firm had been warned by the inspector to fence the couplings in their factory. It would seem that they had provided guards in accordance with the inspector's instructions but had failed, in the case of the couplings which caused the accident, to keep the guards in position. The inspector has been directed to take proceedings against the firm for the breach of the Act involved.

Convictions for Drunkenness on Licensed Premises.

MR. MYER (Lambeth, N.): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer how many convictions were obtained in England and Wales for allowing drunkenness on licensed premises during the three years 1905, 1906, and 1907; and how many licences have changed hands where such convictions have been obtained.

MR. GLADSTONE: The figures asked for in the first part of the Question are given on page 7 of the Introduction to the Licensing Statistics for 1907, under the heading "Prosecutions of Licensed Persons." The number of convictions in 1905 was 935; in 1906, 756; and in 1907, 744. As regards the second part of the Question, I regret to say that I have no information.

Pewsey Level Crossing Fatality.

MR. ROGERS (Wiltshire, Devizes): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention has been called to the fact that on 23rd March a child returning from school was knocked down and killed by a Great Western Railway express on a level crossing at Knowle, Pewsey; whether he is aware that the continuance of this level crossing was strongly condemned at the coroners' inquest by the coroner and the jury, that it has been the subject of repeated complaints by the parish council of Pewsey to the railway company for the last fourteen years, that other fatal accidents have occurred at the same spot, that the crossing is in daily use by the public, more especially by school children, and that this section of the company's line is now used increasingly by fast trains to and from the West; and whether, in view of these facts and the feeling engendered locally by the recurrence of these fatal accidents, he will make such representation to the company as will cause a footbridge to be substituted for this dangerous level crossing.

The PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. Lloyd-George, Carnarvon Boroughs): I am in communication with the railway company with regard to the recommendation of the coroner's jury, and will inform my hon. friend of the result.

Irish Lace Frauds.

Mr. BOLAND (Kerry, S.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he is aware that La Samaritaine, a French firm trading at 99, Regent Street, London, was prosecuted on 27th March and fined £20, at the Marlborough Street Police Court, for exposing and selling as Irish lace a French-made crochet blouse; can he state through what English ports and under what designation French-made crochet is imported; what is the estimated annual value of such importation according to the latest information available; and can he state what steps he proposes to take in order to safeguard the interests of the Irish lace industry from dishonest competition in London and other cities of Great Britain.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE: My attention has been called to the prosecution referred to. I am sorry I cannot give my hon. friend the information he asks for as to the importation of French-made crochet, as the goods are not separately classified in the Customs Returns. With reference to the last paragraph of the Question the Board of Trade are always prepared to consider with a view to prosecution, if the circumstances should warrant it, any cases of infringement of the Merchandise Marks Act that may be put before them which affect the general interests of a trade.

Mr. BOLAND: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman in connection with this gross case of fraud why the Board of Trade has not done as it did in another case, where it prosecuted to conviction and imprisonment a seller of fraudulent Scottish tweed?

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE: That prosecution was undertaken on information supplied to us, and if similar information is brought to our attention in regard to Irish lace we shall be pleased to act on it.

Losses through Licensing Trade Failures.

Mr. MYER: I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer what was the aggregate amount of loss incurred in the licensing trade in England and Wales in the years 1905, 1906 and 1907, respectively, by reason of failures of retail traders to meet their liabilities.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE: My right hon. friend has asked me to answer this Question. The estimated loss to creditors under bankruptcies and deeds of arrangement by reason of failures of publicans and hotel-keepers in England and Wales in the years 1905, 1906, and 1907 is as follows, viz.:—

	£
In the year 1905	- 382,124
,, ,, 1906	- 276,145
,, ,, 1907	- 287,233

City Milk Supply.

Sir F. BANBURY (City of London): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he is aware that the medical officer of the City of London recently reported in some detail upon the unsatisfactory condition of the milk supplied within the City, with suggestions for preventing the contamination of such milk; whether he has received a copy of that Report with certain representations from the Corporation based thereon; and whether he intends dealing with the subject in his Bill.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. JOHN BURNS, Battersea): I have received a copy of the Report referred to. As I stated in reply to a previous Question on this subject, I trust that the effects of the Bill which I hope to introduce will be to secure more satisfactory control over the milk supply of the country.

Anthrax in the City.

MR. ASHLEY: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether his attention has been called to the report of the inquest held in the City Coroner's Court, on 11th March, on the death of Mary Ellen Pooley from anthrax; and whether, having regard to the fact that a death from anthrax was investigated in the same Court on 8th February, and to the recommendation of the jury, in which the City Coroner concurred, that cases of anthrax ought to be included in the list of diseases compulsorily notifiable to medical officers of health, he will take steps to give effect to that recommendation.

MR. JOHN BURNS: My attention has been called to the report of this inquest. As I stated on Monday last, in reply to a Question by the hon. Member for the Ashford Division, it is competent for a sanitary authority, with the consent of the Local Government Board, to make cases of anthrax in human beings compulsorily notifiable in their district.

MR. ASHLEY: Will the right hon. Gentleman issue a circular urging authorities to make it compulsory in all cases?

MR. JOHN BURNS: I will consider that.

Women Clerks in the Savings Bank.

MR. MEAGHER (Kilkenny, N.): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General if he is aware that the Hobhouse Committee appointed last year to inquire into the wages of Post Office servants, have made several recommendations in the different departments of the Post Office which he promised to carry out, and that in the case of women clerks employed in the savings banks, whose old scale of salary was an initial one of £55, with annual increments of £2 10s., the Committee recommended an initial salary of £65, with annual increments of £5; and whether, seeing that according to present arrangements the initial salary is £65 without any increment for five years, he will take steps to give such increments as were recommended by the Committee with a view to encouraging efficiency in the different departments.

THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON, Tower Hamlets, Poplar): The recommendations of the Select Committee in regard to women clerks in the Savings Bank Department have been carried out in full already.

Civil Service Socialists.

MR. STANLEY WILSON (Yorkshire, E.R., Holderness) asked the Postmaster-General whether he was aware that a public demonstration was held by the Civil Servants' Socialist Society at Lambeth Baths on 27th March, and whether this demonstration was held with his approval and consent.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: My attention has not been called to the matter.

MR. STANLEY WILSON: Would the right hon. Gentleman like a copy of the bill advertising the meeting?

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: Anything the hon. Member sends me I shall receive with great pleasure.

AN HON. MEMBER: Put it in the tea-room.

Excess of School-Places.

MR. LANE-FOX (Yorkshire, W.R., Barkston Ash): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education whether he will grant a Return showing the excess of school-places over average attendance in the elementary schools in the area of each local authority in England during the past year.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION (Mr. MCKENNA, Monmouthshire, N.): Table 19 in the Statistical Volume issued by the Board gives the number of school-places, and the average attendance in the area of each local education authority for the statistical year ending 31st July, 1906. The figures for 1906–7 will be published in the next volume.

Licences on the Duchy of Cornwall Estates.

SIR RANDAL CREMER (Shoreditch, Haggerston): I desire to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Chancellor of the Duchy of Cornwall, whether the Duchy, when refusing to renew leases of their property, are under any statutory obligation to compensate publicans, shopkeepers, manufacturers, or any other persons, who may be doing a profitable business, at the expiration of their leases; and, if they are under no statutory obligation to do so, whether it is customary for the Duchy voluntarily to compensate those whose business may suffer or be ruined by the non-renewal of their leases.

MR. RUNCIMAN: As regards the first part of the Question the reply is in the negative. With regard to the second part, the question of voluntary compensation for refusing to renew leases has not arisen, as it has been the practice of the Duchy of Cornwall to give occupying tenants the option of renewing their tenancies.

SIR RANDAL CREMER: I desire to ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, whether the Duchy, when refusing to renew leases of their property, are under any statutory obligation to compensate publicans, shopkeepers, manufacturers, or any other persons who may be doing a profitable business at the expiration of their leases; and, if they are under no statutory obligation to do so, whether it is customary for the Duchy to voluntarily compensate those whose business may suffer or be ruined by the non-renewal of their leases.

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE DUCHY OF LANCASTER (Sir HENRY FOWLER, Wolverhampton, E.): The Duchy of Lancaster is under no special statutory obligation as to compensation. When, after full consideration of all the interests involved, a renewal of a lease is refused, the outgoing lessee would only receive such compensation as he may be entitled to by Statute or custom.

Commissioners of Woods and Forests and Licensed Property.

SIR RANDAL CREMER: I desire to ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the Commissioners of Woods and Forests, whether the Commissioners, when refusing to renew leases of their property, are under any statutory obligation to compensate publicans, shopkeepers, manufacturers, or any other persons who may be doing a profitable business, at the expiration of their leases; and if they are under no statutory obligation to do so, whether it is customary for the Commissioners to voluntarily compensate those whose business may suffer or be ruined by the non-renewal of their leases.

MR. RUNCIMAN: Except in cases to which the Agricultural Holdings Acts may apply, the Commissioners of Woods are not under statutory obligation to compensate persons to whom they may be unable to grant renewed leases, nor is it customary for them to make such persons compensation.

Shetland Herring Fishery.

MR. MORTON (Sutherland): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether he is aware that the herring fishing at Shetland, their only industry, is threatened with extinction by whaling; and whether he will, in accordance with the recommendation of the Departmental Committee of 1904, restrict the licences granted to not more than one steamer for each station.

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Mr. SINCLAIR, Forfarshire): The information before me does not bear out the anticipation of my hon. friend. The Fishery Board is the licensing authority and they cannot impose other restrictions on the issues of licences than those authorised by the Act of last year. That Act, while restricting all new licence holders to one steamer, instructs the Fishery Board to allow additional steamers, but in no case more than four in all, to licence holders, whose factories at 1st January, 1907, were large enough to require such additional steamers for their proper working.

Mr. HUGH LAW (Donegal, W.) asked whether the right hon. Gentleman had not received a petition extensively signed by Irish fishermen in support of the point put by the hon. Gentleman, urging that whaling in either British or Irish waters would be destructive to the herring fisheries; and, if so, whether he would not take it into consideration.

Mr. SINCLAIR said he was aware that a petition was signed by Irish fishermen in regard to whaling on the coast of Ireland, but he had no knowledge of any further action on their part.

Major ANSTRUTHER-GRAY (St. Andrews Burghs) asked whether, in the event of its being proved that the herring fishery was harmed by the numerous whalers, the right hon. Gentleman would limit the number of these ships.

Mr. SINCLAIR said that no limit could be placed except by further legislation. When the circumstances to which the hon. Gentleman alluded occurred, the Government would take them into consideration.

Women Voters in Scotland.

Mr. WATT (Glasgow, College): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether the Scottish Education Bill, introduced last week, in assimilating the School Board franchise to the Parliamentary franchise will deprive women of the votes they now have in the election of School Boards.

Mr. SINCLAIR: The Bill makes provision for assimilating the School Board franchise not to the Parliamentary franchise, but to the Parish Council franchise under which women are admitted as electors. I regret that in introducing the Bill I inadvertently spoke of the Parliamentary instead of the Parish Council franchise.

Mr. WATT: When will the print of the Bill be in the hands of Members?

Mr. SINCLAIR: On Friday, I hope.

United Irish League—Ballintubber Branch.

Captain CRAIG: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if his attention has been drawn to a resolution of the Ballintubber branch of the United Irish League, passed 23rd March last, protesting against the importation by the Congested Districts Board and the Estates Commissioners of migrant tenants from adjoining districts into their parish, and pledging themselves to rout these migrants from their midst; and if it is intended to give land in this parish to tenants from outside and to afford them adequate protection when brought in.

The CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. Birrell, Bristol, N.): The Congested Districts Board and the Estates Commissioners both inform me that they have no knowledge of the resolution referred to in the Question, and neither of these bodies have yet acquired land in the parish of Ballintubber. It would be premature to say what the intentions of the Board and the Commissioners may be as to the distribution of the lands, if any, which they may hereafter acquire in that parish.

Ennis Shooting Outrage.

Captain CRAIG: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that a farmer called Burke was shot at on Saturday, 21st March near Ennis, County Clare, and that Burke has lately taken a farm; will he say if any one has been arrested in connection with this offence; if it is intended to afford adequate protection to Burke; and, seeing that this man has become a centre of disturbance, whether it is the intention of the Estates Commissioners to acquire compulsorily Burke's farm.

Mr. BIRRELL: It is reported to the police that Michael Burke was fired at on 21st March. A man has been arrested for the offence and the case is pending. The police will afford all necessary protection to Burke. He has not lately taken any farm, but last year he purchased a farm under the Land Act. I do not quite know what implication is intended to be made in the last part of the Question, but in any event, the Estates Commissioners do not compulsorily acquire farms which are subject to a land purchase annuity.

Irish Milk Supplies.

MR. J. DEVLIN (Belfast, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state if any, and how many, of the Irish urban authorities have availed themselves of the right to take special precautions with regard to the regulation of the milk supply; and whether any reports on the subject are forthcoming.

MR. BIRRELL: Forty-five out of the ninety-five urban authorities in Ireland have adopted local regulations for the control of the milk supply under the existing Orders. These Orders will be superseded from 1st May next by the recent Dairies and Milkshops (Ireland) Order, 1908, which embodies the previous model regulations on the subject and will apply uniformly to all districts in Ireland. The milk supply, together with the other matters affecting the public health, is dealt with in the periodical reports of the Local Government Board's medical inspectors. The substance of these reports is communicated to the sanitary authorities concerned, and such reports as possess more than local interest are published with the Annual Report of the Local Government Board.

MR. MOORE: As this question of milk supply is intimately bound up with the question of the condemnation of tuberculous cattle, will the right hon. Gentleman remove the difficulty with regard to the working of that branch of inquiry by providing that half the compensation for slaughtered animals shall be provided from Government sources?

MR. BIRRELL: I am prepared to consider that proposal.

Grenville Grazing Lands.

MR. WILLIAM ABRAHAM (Cork County, N.E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state whether the Estates Commissioners have concluded the negotiations for purchase of the grazing lands on the estate of Sir Edward Kinihan, Glenville, County Cork; and, if so, when do the Commissioners anticipate being able to divide the lands into allotments and proceed to allocate the same.

MR. BIRRELL: The Estates Commissioners have not yet concluded their negotiations for the purchase of the lands in question, and therefore cannot say when they will be in a position to distribute the lands.

Dartrey Estate Evicted Tenant.

MR. LARDNER (Monaghan, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Estates Commissioners have taken any steps to effect the reinstatement of John McKenna, who was evicted from his farm on the Dartrey estate, in the townland of Cloghnart, County Monaghan, or what steps they propose to adopt with a view to providing a suitable farm for him.

MR. BIRRELL: The Estates Commissioners have referred this case to one of their inspectors with a view to providing the applicant with a suitable farm, if possible.

Sternes Charities, Monaghan.

MR. LARDNER: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state when the Estates Commissioners were offered the estate of the Trustees of Sternes Charities, situate in the Counties of Monaghan and Armagh, for sale by them to the tenants; when it will be inspected by the Commissioners; and if there is any likelihood of the sale being completed at an early date.

MR. BIRRELL: Formal proceedings for the sale of this estate to the Estates Commissioners were instituted on 19th December, 1906. The Commissioners have referred the case to their inspector, but have not yet received his Report on the estate. It is not at present possible to say when the sale will be completed.

Mr. LARDNER: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the effect of this delay has been an addition of two years to the purchase money?

Mr. BIRRELL: I regret the delay which very often occurs, but we are doing our best to accelerate matters.

Sir John Keane's Cappoquin Estate.

Mr. O'SHEE (Waterford, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether an inspector of the Estates Commissioners has inspected the holdings proposed to be sold on the estate of Sir John Keane, near Cappoquin, County Waterford, and when; whether he at the same time inspected the larger number of holdings on the estate in respect of which the offer of the landlord was refused by the tenants as unreasonable and exorbitant; and, if not, how soon he or some other inspector will be sent to do so.

Mr. BIRRELL: The holdings for which purchase agreements have been lodged have not yet been inspected, but when the inspection takes place, the inspector will also visit and report upon the holdings in respect of which purchase agreements have not been lodged. The case will be dealt with in order of priority, but the Estates Commissioners cannot at present name a date for the inspection.

The Aghatubrid Estate.

Mr. BOLAND: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, whether he is now in a position to say if the Estates Commissioners have received an answer from the solicitor of the Aghatubrid estate of the late Mr. J. W. Leahy to the letter written by the Commissioners last week; and whether the present owner of this estate are now willing to carry out the agreement for purchase made in January, 1907; and can he state what justification is alleged on the part of the owners for issuing processes for arrears of rent which were agreed to be wiped out by the late owner.

Mr. BIRRELL: The Estates Commissioners have not yet received a reply. I informed the hon. Member on 27th March that the Commissioners had then written to the solicitor giving him fourteen days in which to reply. The fourteen days have not yet expired.

Mr. BOLAND: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that next Saturday—4th April—these tenants have to travel forty-five miles to answer summonses?

Mr. BIRRELL; I will inquire into that.

Garryfine Evicted Tenants.

Mr. O'SHAUGHNESSY (Limerick, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can say what steps the Estates Commissioners are taking to reinstate Robert and Jeremiah Dunworth in the farm from which they were evicted at Garryfine, in the County of Limerick, on the Harkness estate.

Mr. BIRRELL: The Estates Commissioners are unable to reinstate the applicants in their former holding which is in the occupation of a tenant, but their case has been referred to an inspector with the object of providing them with another holding if possible.

Mr. O'SHAUGHNESSY: Why do not the Estates Commissioners put the Evicted Tenants Act in force in this case?

Mr. BIRRELL: It is land in the occupation of a tenant.

Mr. O'SHAUGHNESSY: Have the Estates Commissioner inquired if the tenancy in this case is bogus or not?

Mr. BIRRELL: They have made inquiries.

Mr. O'SHAUGHNESSY: What has been the result?

Mr. BIRRELL: They do not agree with the hon. Member.

The Theft of the Dublin Crown Jewels.

MAJOR COATES (Lewisham): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state the dates between which the Crown Jewels must have been stolen from Dublin Castle.

MR. BIRRELL; The proceedings before the Commission of Inquiry showed incontestably that whoever stole the Jewels did so between 11th June and 6th July of last year. As I am on this subject, I may refer to a most cowardly falsehood connecting the name of Lord Haddo with the theft of the Jewels, which has obtained wide circulation both in Dublin and in London, and has found its way into certain newspapers. Ridiculous as such a statement may appear, it is not always easy to maintain total indifference to such charges. I am able to say, of my own knowledge, that Lord Haddo left Dublin on 7th March. 1907, and lived in Scotland and London from that time without intermission until 7th December. I hope this statement may put an end to the business of the scandalmongers—in this particular at all events. If I may be permitted to mention the name of the Lord-Lieutenant in the matter, I may add that Lord Aberdeen was, from the first, most anxious that there should be the fullest possible inquiry into all the circumstances attending the loss of the Crown Jewels, and would have been glad if it had been possible to call into existence a Statutory Commission for that purpose.

MR. MOORE: Arising out of that, and fully accepting the disclaimer on the part of Lord Haddo, will the right hon. Gentleman take equal steps for the prevention of scandal-mongering and insinuations against Lord Ashtown, who has been equally unfairly abused?

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order. That does not arise out of this question.

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): May I ask whether it is a fact that Dublin Herald and Athlone Herald were asked to resign their offices by the Government, and, if so, why was that done?

MR. BIRRELL: I must ask for notice of that Question.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): Inasmuch as the libels to which the right hon. Gentleman has referred have been published in England, may I ask him why have no proceedings been taken for criminal libel in the criminal Courts?

MR. BIRRELL: That is a very proper question. I can only say that legal advice has been taken on the matter, and action, or rather inaction, has been adopted in accordance with that advice.

The Glenahiery Outrage.

MR. CHARLES CRAIG (Antrim, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that Mr. Kelly, hardware merchant, of Waterford, stated, upon the recent hearing of the appeal in Lord Ashtown's case, that immediately after the outrage at Glenahiery he informed the police in Waterford that upon 23rd July, 1907, a stranger had purchased in his shop 60 pounds of blasting powder and 16 feet of fuse; and that County-Inspector Jennings, upon the same occasion, stated upon oath that upon 16th August he was made aware of this purchase; will he state the reason why this fact was not communicated to District-Inspector Preston, the officer in charge of the case, until 16th September or to the Inspector-General until 3rd October; and can he explain why no reference of any kind to this vital and material fact is to be found in any of the reports of County Inspector Jennings.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. CHERRY, Liverpool, Exchange): The facts are as stated in the first two parts of the Question, save that County-Inspector Jennings became aware of the purchase on 17th not 16th of August. The Inspector-General informs me that upon the receipt of the information from Mr. Kelly every effort was made by the Waterford and other police to clear up the matter. While this inquiry was proceeding in certain directions, and particularly until some connection could be shown between the purchase of the powder from Mr. Kelly and the explosion at Glenahiery, the Waterford police did not consider it necessary to inform District-Inspector Preston or the Inspector-General of the facts. As the result of the police enquiries it was not found possible to establish any connection between the purchase of the powder at Waterford and the explosion at Glenahiery, and for this reason no reference was made to the matter in the reports.

MR. MOORE asked why the information was communicated to District-Inspector Preston on 16th September if there was no connection between the two.

MR. CHERRY: I cannot inform the hon. Member. If he will put down a Question, I will make inquiries.

MR. CHARLES CRAIG: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the fact that upon 23rd July, 1907, a stranger had purchased in the shop of Mr. Kelly, of Waterford, 60 pounds of blasting powder and 16 feet of fuse was a vital and material matter for any narrative of facts to be supplied to Lord Ashtown prior to the investigation of his claim on 21st September, 1907, before the County Court Judge of Waterford; whether the fact of this purchase was known to County-Inspector Jennings on 16th August and to District-Inspector Preston on 16th September; and, if so, can he explain why no information of the fact was at any time supplied to Lord Ashtown; will he explain why District-Inspector Preston, with this knowledge in his possession on 16th September, not only made no mention of it before the County Court Judge on 21st September, but upon the contrary swore that all efforts on the part of the police had failed to trace or place the purchase of the powder or fuse.

MR. CHERRY: The police at Waterford were informed that on 23rd July an unknown man purchased in Mr. Kelly's shop 65 pounds of blasting powder and three coils of fuse. The fact of this purchase became known to County-Inspector Jennings on 17th August, and to District-Inspector Preston about 16th September. This answers the supplementary Question put just now, I think. Upon hearing of the matter County-Inspector Jennings at once instituted most exhaustive inquiries. The police have been unable to trace the person who purchased the powder or to ascertain what became of it, and, as I have already stated, no connection whatever has been established between it and the explosion at Glenahiery. It was considered unnecessary therefore to give information of the fact to Lord Ashtown, as the police officers referred to did not think that the fact of the purchase could form an element in the case in the total absence of evidence connecting it with the explosion.

MR. MOORE: May I draw attention to the fact—[Cries of "No"]—that the right hon. Gentleman has not answered the last part of the Question.

*MR. SPEAKER: That is the Question which the right hon. Gentleman has asked shall be put down.

MR. MOORE: The right hon. Gentleman has just said he has answered it, and I wish to call attention to the fact he has not.

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. and learned Member had better put it down.

MR. CHARLES CRAIG: Will the hon. Gentleman answer the last part of the Question—why the inspector, with this knowledge in his possession, not only made no mention of it before the County Court Judge on 21st September, but swore that all efforts on the part of the police had failed to trace the purchase of the fuse?

MR. CHERRY: That is quite true. They tried to trace it, and they had a suspicion on the subject, but it was only a suspicion.

MR. CHARLES CRAIG: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that County-Inspector Jennings at the Waterford Assizes in March last, stated upon oath that, from the date of the explosion at Glenahiery on 14th August, 1907, up to the moment he was giving evidence, he had never entertained even the slightest suspicion of Lord Ashtown in connection with the outrage, and that District-Inspector Preston stated upon oath in Dungarvan on 21st September last, and again at Waterford Assizes on 4th March last, that he never intended to make any suggestion or charge against Lord Ashtown in connection with the outrage, and that never at any time was he in possession of any evidence that would justify any such suggestion or charge, and that the county council and the ratepayers at Waterford Assizes in March last expressly disclaimed and repudiated through their counsel any such suggestion or charge, and did the County Court Judge in September last, and the Judge of Assize in March last, declare that there was not the slightest foundation for any such suggestion or charge; and whether, in view of these facts, His Majesty's Government propose to make any charge against Lord Ashtown.

Mr. CHERRY: The proceedings in this case both before the County Court Judge and the Assize Court were fully reported in the newspapers to which the hon. Member can refer. I cannot say whether the evidence or the statements of the Judges and others are correctly summarised in the Question or not. The Government have not at present in their possession information which would justify them in making a charge against any person in connection with the occurrence.

Galway Assault Trial.

Captain CRAIG: I beg to ask Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland if his attention has been drawn to the trial at Galway of John Joyce, Peter Joyce, and John Walsh, for an assault on Police Constable Joseph Hazlett; whether he is aware that juries at Galway and also in Limerick had already twice previously disagreed in the case of these men; that Mr. Justice Dodd at the third trial said that the case was quite plain for the jury to deal with, and that the only evidence was against the traversers, but the jury insisted on acquitting them; and if he intends to call for a Report from the learned Judge, or what further step does he intend to take to vindicate the law in this case.

Mr. CHERRY: My attention has been called to the trial of the persons referred to in the Question, inasmuch as they were prosecuted by me as Attorney-General. At the third trial, as stated in the Question, the jury acquitted the prisoners, and no further steps can be taken against them. The learned Judge in his charge said that the case was quite plain for the jury to deal with, and that he felt that they would do their duty, as jurors, according to the evidence.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL: Is it not the case that a person tried for a criminal offence and acquitted cannot be retried, as the acquittal is an absolute bar to further proceedings?

Mr. CHERRY: That is as I have said.

Irish Lace Frauds.

Mr. BOLAND (Kerry, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the successful prosecution on 27th March, by the Irish Industrial Development Association, of the French firm La Samaritaine, trading at 99, Regent Street, London, for exposing and selling as Irish lace a crochet blouse made in France; whether he is aware that a fine of £20 was imposed on the defendants; and whether, in view of the importance of the case to the lace classes carried on under the Congested Districts Board, he will state what steps he proposes to take in order to acquaint those classes with the unfair competition by which they are being menaced, and in order to safeguard the interests of the Irish lace industry.

The VICE-PRESIDENT of the DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE for IRELAND (Mr. T. W. Russell, Tyrone, S.): My right hon. friend has asked me to answer this Question. The Department are aware of these frauds, and sent two witnesses to give evidence in the cases in question. One of these witnesses, namely, Miss Anderson, the Home Industries Inspectress, gives information concerning such matters to the classes which work in connection with the Department, but the remedy does not lie with the classes as a rule. The Board of Trade are empowered by the Merchandise Marks Act, 1891, to undertake the prosecution of offences under the Merchandise Marks Act, 1887, in cases which appear to the Board to affect the general interests of the country, or of a section of the community or of a trade, and in which they are furnished with evidence sufficient to justify them in undertaking the prosecution. In answer to a recent Question put by the hon. Member for North Cork County, I stated that the Department would be prepared to bring under the notice of the Board of Trade, for such action as they may think desirable, any cases of fraud affecting Irish industries that might come under their notice. I also stated that the Department were aware of the action of the Irish Industrial Development Association in this respect, and that I consider that much of this work can be most effectively done by such an agency representative of the traders themselves.

MR. BOLAND: Will the hon. Gentleman answer the last part of the Question?

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: The Department are considering the desirability of strengthening the staff working in Great Britain.

Inferior Calf-Meals sold in Ireland.

MR. HALPIN (Clare, W.): I beg to ask the Vice-President of the Department of Agriculture (Ireland) what action his Department have taken with regard to the analysis of calf meals since his reply to a Question on this subject in August last; will he state whether, in the opinion of the Department, calf meals are extensively sold in Ireland which are inferior in quality and extravagant in price; whether the calf meal "Linko" is still being sold; whether his Department consider this a suitable calf meal; and, if not, what steps it is proposed to take to warn farmers against the use of this and other unsuitable materials during the coming season.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: The Department have continued to examine samples of calf meals submitted to them for analysis by the County Agricultural Instructors; the analyses of these samples show that calf meals are still extensively sold in Ireland which are inferior in quality and extravagant in price. The calf meal, "Linko," is still being imported into Ireland; the Department do not consider this meal to be at all suitable for use with separated milk for calf rearing purposes. Agricultural instructors are now attached to every county, and farmers can obtain advice from them as to the character of the meals which they should use. The Department will continue to examine any meals submitted to them for analysis by these instructors. A placard is again being exhibited at every police barracks in Ireland warning farmers to be careful in their purchase of materials for calf feeding purposes.

Carlisle Pier, Kingstown.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury if he will cause to be laid upon the Table of the House forthwith all correspondence that has passed on the subject of the use of the Carlisle Pier, Kingstown, by vessels other than the mail steamers, between the Treasury and the Commissioners of Public Works, the Commissioners of Kingstown Harbour, the London and North Western Railway Company, the City of Dublin Steam Packet Company, and any other steamboat company, or any individual or individuals, or Government Department, between 1st January, 1907, and the present date; and whether he will now publish all the correspondence and papers dealing with the agreement come to in 1898 when it was agreed by the Treasury to pay £6,500 per annum for the acceleration of the day mail service, and the correspondence relating to the altered arrangements now——

MR. RUNCIMAN: I will consider what Papers can be laid.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: Will the Secretary to the Treasury give his immediate attention to this matter, as it is one of the greatest possible urgency? As a matter of fact, I understand proceedings are taking place to-day which bear upon the dispute regarding the harbour of Kingstown. Cannot the hon. Member give me an Answer at once?

MR. RUNCIMAN: I hope to be able to do so within a day or two. I will lose no time.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: Is it not a fact that the Dublin Steam Packet Company have taken proceedings in the Court of Chancery here to restrain the steamers of the London and North-Western Railway Company from going to Carlisle Wharf, and will the Government not see their way, pending the decision in those proceedings which I understand are to be expedited in every way, to suspend their permission for the steamers to go to that wharf, by which permission the issue in the Chancery proceedings is really prejudged?

MR. RUNCIMAN: I shall have to consult my advisers.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: Is there not another wharf at Kingstown to which the London and North-Western Railway can go for the next week or ten days before the decision of the Court of Chancery is come to? Do the Government think it fair for the decision of the Court to be prejudged by allowing the steamers to go to this wharf now?

MR. RUNCIMAN: I am sure the hon. Member knows quite well that we do not desire to prejudge the decision of the Court in this matter. I cannot answer on this very complicated question without notice.

Clubs and the Licensing Bill.

MR. PIKE PEASE (Darlington): On behalf of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Croydon, I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, in view of the fact that Clauses 36 to 42 of the Licensing Bill are solely designed for the registration of clubs which, under the definition contained in Clause 28 of the Licensing Act of 1902, are not conducted in good faith, but are clubs only in name, he will withdraw the clauses referred to from the Bill, or will insert an excepting clause or proviso confining the proposed legislation to clubs not conducted in good faith, and exempting from the operation of the Act the thousands of well-conducted clubs which are frequented by men and women of all classes of society in every part of England.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. ASQUITH, Fifeshire, E.): The clauses referred to, so far from being "solely designed for the registration of clubs, which are not conducted in good faith," have for their principal object the exclusion of such clubs from registration. There is no intention to hamper the liberties of *bona fide* clubs, and the Government are giving, and will continue to give, very careful consideration to all proposals which may be made for the improvement of these clauses.

Temperance Clubs and the Licensing Bill.

MR. WEDGWOOD: I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer if he would consider the advisability of inserting in the Licensing Bill a clause to show conclusively that temperance clubs in which no alcoholic liquor is sold will be excluded from the purview of the Bill.

MR. ASQUITH: Part IV. of the Bill deals only with clubs which are registered under the Licensing Act, 1902. Such registration is only required when it is desired that alcoholic drinks should be supplied upon the club premises, and, thus, clubs which do not seek the privilege of supplying liquor are in no way affected by the Bill.

Private Members' Privileges.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS (Birmingham, Bordesley): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, when there are no Notices of Motions to be discussed at 8.15 on Wednesdays, it is the intention of the Government to move the adjournment of the House, thereby preventing the consideration of private Members' Bills on that night.

MR. ASQUITH: No, Sir; the occurrence happens so infrequently that the Government have formed no fixed intention on the subject. They would always be guided in such a case by regard to the general convenience of the House.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS hoped the right hon. Gentleman would give a sympathetic reply to the following Question, whether, seeing that for two years he had been trying to get a place for a measure deeply affecting a class of people in whose welfare he was much concerned, and seeing that that opportunity occurred on Wednesday last when the Bill had the first place, and seeing——

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order. The right hon. Gentleman's observations are rather in the nature of a speech.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS asked whether the right hon. Gentleman would, in fairness, give an opportunity for the consideration of that Bill, seeing that the opportunity was snatched away.

MR. ASQUITH: No, Sir; the opportunity was not snatched away at all. My right hon. friend acted in conjunction with those who represent the opinion of Gentlemen on the other side of the House, and what was done was done for the general convenience of the House. I am afraid I cannot offer any special facilities.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL asked whether the right hon. Gentleman would give special facilities to every Motion dealing with three acres and a cow?

[No Answer was returned.]

Irish Land Purchase.

MR. O'SHEE: I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, in view of the losses incurred in the flotation of Land Stock and in the payment of a bonus of 12 per cent. to Irish landlords who agree to sell, he will consider the advisability of meeting a portion of the same by imposing a tax of 12 per cent. on incomes derived from the tenanted and untenanted lands of landlords who decline to sell.

MR. ASQUITH: I do not think the suggestion is a practicable one.

Licensing Reduction Schemes.

MR. ASHLEY: I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether it is contemplated that the reduction schemes to be prepared by the licensing justices under Clause 6 of the Licensing Bill shall specify the particular licenses to be discontinued; and whether in that case steps will be taken to ensure that no Government Department owning licensed houses shall have information earlier than the general public of the houses with which it is proposed to deal.

MR. ASQUITH: No, Sir. Under Clause 7, the particular licences to be extinguished are to be selected by the licensing justices, after the scheme has been submitted to and approved by the Licensing Commission; and it is explicitly provided that the selection of licences for extinction shall be in the free and unqualified discretion of the licensing justices.

Imports of Tobacco Samples.

MR. COURTHOPE (Sussex, Rye): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether samples of American tobacco are admitted into this country upon the deposit of the duty payable; whether, and under what circumstances, such deposit is refunded; whether similar concessions have been made in the case of Colonial tobacco from Rhodesia; and, if not, on what grounds this preferential treatment is given to the United States of America.

MR. ASQUITH: Samples of tobacco imported from the United States of America are admitted upon deposit of the duty payable (or on bond being entered into for the amount thereof) if brought by commercial travellers of that country. The deposit is refunded (or the bond cancelled) when the samples are re-exported or placed in a bonded warehouse. The concession has been granted in consequence of the Agreement between this country and the United States, signed at London on 19th November last. The Board of Customs have intimated to the Board of Trade that they see no objection to the extension to the British Colonies of the special facilities for clearance of samples brought by commercial travellers, if this should be considered desirable, provided that like facilities are granted there to commercial travellers from this country.

The Housing Bill.

MR. LYTTELTON (St. George's, Hanover Square): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, with reference to the Housing Bill, whether, as this is a very long and intricate measure which proceeds to enact very largely by reference to other Acts, he will ask the President of the Local Government Board to circulate an explanatory Memorandum with the Bill?

MR. ASQUITH: Yes, Sir, I will certainly ask him.

PORT OF LONDON BILL.

Copy ordered, "of Memorandum in reference to the Port of London Bill."—(*Mr. Lloyd-George.*)

Copy presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 109.]

INCEST BILL.

Reported, with an Amendment, from Standing Committee A.

Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 110.]

Minutes of the Proceedings of the Standing Committee to be printed. [No. 110.]

Bill, as amended (in the Standing Committee), to be taken into consideration upon Friday, and to be printed. [Bill 185.]

LOCAL AUTHORITIES (ADMISSION OF THE PRESS) BILL.

Reported, with Amendments, from Standing Committee A.

Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 111.]

Minutes of the Proceedings of the Standing Committee to be printed. [No. 111.]

Bill, as amended (by the Standing Committee), to be taken into consideration upon Friday, 26th June, and to be printed. [Bill 186.]

CHAIRMEN'S PANEL.

Mr. STUART-WORTLEY reported from the Chairmen's Panel; That they had appointed Mr. Laurence Hardy to be Chairman of Standing Committee B, and Mr. John William Wilson to be Chairman of Standing Committee C.

Report to lie upon the Table.

Leave given to the Chairmen's Panel to make a Special Report.

Special Report brought up, and read.

Special Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 112.]

Minutes of Proceedings to be printed. [No. 112.]

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).

Sir WILLIAM BRAMPTON GURDON reported from the Committee of Selection; That they had discharged the following Members from Standing Committee A: Mr. Carlile and Sir Francis Lowe; and had appointed in substitution (in respect of the Agricultural Education in Elementary Schools Bill): Viscount Morpeth and Sir Philip Magnus.

Report to lie upon the Table.

TRUSTS BILL.

The Select Committee on the Trusts Bill was nominated of:—Mr. Beale, Mr. Clancy, Mr. Cave, Dr. Hazel, Mr. Hills, Mr. Micklem, Mr. John O'Connor, Mr. Radford, Mr. Rendall, Mr. Stewart-Smith, and Mr. Salter.

Ordered, "That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records."

Ordered, "That Three be the quorum."—(*Mr. Whiteley.*)

PROSECUTION OF OFFENCES (AMENDMENT) [EXPENSES].

Resolution reported,—"That it is expedient to authorise the payment out of moneys provided by Parliament of the salaries and remuneration of the Director of Public Prosecutions and assistant directors appointed under any Act of the present session to amend the Prosecution of Offences Acts, 1879 and 1884, and of the Expenses incurred in pursuance of such Act."

Resolution read a second time.

Sɪʀ F. BANBURY (City of London) moved an Amendment to limit such salaries to £3,000. He said he regretted the President of the Board of Trade had not remained in his seat, because the right hon. Gentleman himself moved a similar Amendment to a similar Resolution four years ago, and he would like to know how it was the right hon. Gentleman was not supporting him in the example he himself had given. He was prepared to admit that the right hon. Gentleman's Amendment, although based on the same premisses, was not so reasonable as his own, but he wished it not to be forgotten that the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who now led the House, voted for that Amendment and was present through the whole debate, so that he had no excuse for suggesting that he went into the lobby without knowing what exactly was before the House and what had transpired in the course of the discussion. Indeed, the right hon. Gentleman on that occasion actually went so far as to arraign the action of the then Government. He noticed that the President of the Board of Education, although in the House, was looking the other way; perhaps he was regretting he had not followed the example of his colleagues and left the House, for he also made an extremely eloquent speech in support of that Amendment, and if he had forgotten it he would be only too pleased to refresh his memory by reading the report from *Hansard*, with a copy of which he had fortified himself. But that was not all. Some ten days ago in Committee on the Resolution he called the attention of the Attorney-General—who, although he took no part in the debate, certainly voted for the Amendment to which he had referred — to the fact that the Resolution did not appear on the Order Paper—an omission which gave rise to the debate of 8th June, 1904. It was true that the Resolution appeared in the Votes, but then hon. Members had not time to read through all those Papers in order to see if any of the Notices had reference to the business for the day, and it certainly would very much simplify matters for every Member of Parliament if there appeared on the Order Paper for the day all Resolutions and Notices which referred to the particular business to be dealt with. The hon. and learned Gentleman who pleaded the other day that he was not very proficient in Parliamentary procedure gave a distinct pledge — [the Aᴛᴛᴏʀɴᴇʏ-Gᴇɴᴇʀᴀʟ dissented]—gave a distinct pledge, as he would see on reference to *Hansard* when printed—that if he had been guilty of any error he would remedy it. Yet in spite of that the very same cause of complaint existed that day and the Resolution he had to move did not appear on the Paper; indeed, he doubted if, with the exception of himself and possibly the hon. and learned Gentleman, there was a Member of the House who had seen the Resolution. He would ask the Attorney-General how it was that, having given a distinct pledge in this matter, he had not carried it out. He had also a question to put to the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, who also made a speech on the occasion he had referred to and complained that the Home Office had made no estimate whatever of the expenses likely to be incurred. Incidentally, he might say that none had been made in this instance. But the Financial Secretary on the occasion in question was extremely eloquent and talked in a most determined manner about the bad practices of the late Government. A week ago only he asked the hon. Gentleman if he would kindly communicate to the Chancellor of the Exchequer the feeling which existed on that side of the House and request the right hon. Gentleman to take steps to avoid a recurrence of what they considered to be an unnecessary concealment of business to be taken by the House. The Financial Secretary in reply to that appeal nodded and smiled, but so far as he could see there had been no other result. If hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite were right in their assertion four years ago that the Government were acting wrongly, what was their position to-day? Were they going to stand up in a white sheet and express penitence for their own shortcomings, or were they going to carry out their own promises? He thought the Attorney-General might have made a better defence than he did a week ago. He wished to be perfectly fair to him in the matter; he might have retorted that he (Sir F. Banbury) was in the same boat because he voted in a contrary way four years ago. He was prepared to admit having done that, but he desired at the same time to give the reason for his action. The Amendment on that occasion was moved by the right hon. Gentleman who now held office as President of the Board of Trade. It was not such a good Amendment as the one he was now submitting, for the reason that it curtailed and limited the expenditure over the whole Department, whereas his own Amendment only limited it in so far as the Director and Assistant Director were concerned, and it was a very important distinction. Then again, four years ago, the right hon. Gentleman mixed up two questions—not only that of expenditure, but also whether Resolutions such as these ought to appear on the Order Paper, and whether or not it was the duty of the Treasury to have made an estimate. That was one of the points on which the division took place, and it so happened that on that occasion it would have been impossible for the Treasury to have made an estimate—an accurate estimate—of the possible expenditure. Now he had avoided those difficulties on this occasion by making his Amendment applicable only to the salaries of the well-known and recognised officials, as to whom there could be no doubt what the cost would be. That consequently justified his change of front. The only point that remained was whether or not these Resolutions should have appeared on the Order Paper, and on that he would point out that that was a matter over which he, as a private Member, had no control, and seeing that he could not distinguish as between different parts of the Amendment four years ago, he submitted that he was justified in not voting against his own Party when the result might have been to turn his own friends out of office. What would have been the outcome of such a proceeding?

*MR. SPEAKER: I think the hon. Member should confine his remarks to his Amendment.

SIR F. BANBURY said he would do so. That Amendment limited the expenditure to £4,000 when proposed a week ago, and the hon. and learned Gentleman in opposing it then said the reduction was too large. He had endeavoured to meet him in that matter. He did not wish to place him either in the disadvantageous position of having too much money voted, for he quite sympathised with, and was always ready to help him in any effort to economise, especially as at the present time economy was very necessary. He had, therefore, altered his Amendment and reduced the figure to £3,000, for it was evident that if £4,000 was too much, £3,000 was more or less the exact figure that might be saved. Was there any reason why those figures should not be inserted in the Resolution? He quite admitted that when a new Department was set up it was impossible to say exactly what the expense of the Department as a whole would be. He understood that there were no precedents to guide the Treasury in this case, and in that view he was confirmed by a little remark made by the President of the Board of Trade in the year 1904—

"That the moment they employed lawyers—and he knew something of lawyers, being one himself—their bills did not come to a trifle."

That was one of the reasons why he had not by his former Amendment limited the expenditure over the new Department as a whole, but confined it merely to the Director and Assistant Directors. He trusted that on this occasion the hon. and learned Gentleman would accept his Amendment, and that if a similar Resolution were moved in the future he would carry out the pledge given him a few days ago, that such Resolution should be placed on the Order Paper. As he could not speak again, if the hon. and learned Gentleman wished any explanation from him he could put to him interrogatories, and he would be glad to reply. This was an extremely important matter and was not confined to the present Resolution, but applied to all Resolutions for the spending of money. An hon. Member had said something about giving the hon. and learned Gentleman a blank cheque. He had no wish to give a blank cheque to the Government, in which he had not much confidence, or to anyone. Blank cheques were a great mistake. Now that the Financial Secretary to the Treasury was present he hoped that his remarks would bear fruit, and that some distinct understanding would be come to as to the exact course to be pursued in the future. He begged to move.

Colonel LOCKWOOD (Essex, Epping) seconded the Amendment.

Amendment proposed—

"At the end of the Resolution to add the words 'such salaries not to exceed £3,000 in all.'"—(*Sir F. Banbury*).

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Sir W. Robson, South Shields) said that the hon. Baronet had been kind enough to invite him to address interrogatories to him in order to elucidate his meaning. He could assure the hon. Baronet that his meaning was perfectly obvious and that no interrogatories were necessary. The hon. Baronet had drawn attention to some previous occasion when he alleged that a like Amendment had been proposed to a like Motion. He was not quite sure that they were like. It was somewhat difficult to imagine a Resolution of an exactly similar character to the present one, which dealt with a new Department founded on the necessities of a new Act, which introduced quite an unknown quantity of labour in the administration of the law. They might have a great many new Bills, some of which necessitated a good deal of labour, while others necessitated little. It was, therefore, impossible to argue from the case of one Bill to the case of another. Consequently the previous instances mentioned by the hon. Baronet gave the House very little assistance. The hon. Baronet seemed to think that there was some small defect on the part of the Government in regard to the notice that had been given of this Motion. He had a little difficulty in understanding the hon. Baronet's point in regard to procedure; but he could assure him that there had been nothing whatever unusual in the procedure on the present occasion.

Sir F. BANBURY said he did not allege that it was unusual, but that it was a procedure which, in his opinion, was bad, and which had been condemned by the hon. and learned Gentleman.

Sir W. ROBSON thought that the hon. Baronet had clarified his meaning. He understood the hon. Baronet to suggest that it had been an unusual procedure. He had never objected to a Resolution like the present, but to a Resolution relating to another Bill altogether, which was a very different matter. If the hon. Baronet would show him a similar Bill to the present he would be glad to consider the procedure then adopted; but in the present case the Government had followed precisely the procedure invariably adopted. It was quite true that the hon. Baronet had fallen upon some observations of his on another Bill, but they did not apply to the present measure. If there had been unusual procedure, taken inadvertently on his part, he would have endeavoured to have it corrected, but that was not the case. He now came to the hon. Baronet's Amendment. The hon. Baronet's memory was treacherous in his recollection of what took place on the last occasion on which this Resolution was discussed. What he then said was that £4,000, the figure they were then dealing with, might be and probably would be excessive in regard to the initial expenses of the new Department, but that it might or might not, and probably would not be adequate having regard to the ultimate expenditure which might be required for the new Department. They proposed to add simply to the staff of the Department a new Director and a few additional professional clerks. The number of the existing staff, he thought, was eleven, who would be transferred, and there would be some addition of shorthand clerks and professional clerks. Then there was a new Director. At present they had not resolved on the appointment of any Assistant Directors. They would wait to see how the work developed; and he hoped that for some time they might go on with the additional assistance he had just indicated. In that case he anticipated that the expenditure of £3,000 or £4,000 would be sufficient. The hon. Baronet said that there had been some misconception as to the meaning of his Amendment on the last occasion. Certainly he took it to cover the salaries and expenses of the new Department, and it might have been open to that ambiguity of interpretation. However, he hoped that the £3,000 for salaries mentioned by the hon. Baronet would be adequate under the arrangements at present proposed, though £3,000 would not be adequate if it was found necessary to appoint an Assistant Director. The Treasury themselves were sanguine on the point. The new Director had great powers of work, and by concentrating his great abilities on his work he might be able to do with less assistance than was contemplated at the moment. It was impossible to say how many appeals might come up from the country under the new Criminal Appeal Act. When he was a Recorder in the North he represented a population of more than a quarter of a million and during ten years there had been no appeal. He remembered on one occasion inviting that an appeal should be taken on a point of law which had been raised and which he had overruled, but no appeal was actually taken. But under the facilities now given for appeals it was a mere speculation what the number might be. They must, therefore, have something of a free hand in dealing with what might be a great accession of new work to the Department and for that reason he was unable to accept the Amendment of the hon. Baronet.

LORD BALCARRES (Lancashire, Chorley) said that surely some estimate of the proposed expenditure should have been provided by the hon. and learned Gentleman and his colleagues at the Treasury.

SIR W. ROBSON: That has been given to the House.

LORD BALCARRES said that the hon. and learned Gentleman had stated that £4,000 was asked for, but that he did not mean to spend £4,000. Beyond that the hon. and learned Gentleman had given no information to the House. All he said was that he could give no precise indication of what the number of appeals might be, but if the House was to vote the money they should have more information.

SIR W. ROBSON: All the information was given that we had to give.

LORD BALCARRES said that it was an extraordinary haphazard way in which the present Treasury conducted its business. He thought that before the financial purists spoke they ought to note that they had not received a more exact estimate than that which was announced by the Attorney-General. A rather surprising and curious incident had happened that morning, viz., that on the first day of the financial year Supplementary Estimates had been presented for the year 1908–1909. Although perhaps they could not expect any more precise figures from the Attorney-General he was surprised at the action of the Treasury in this matter.

CAPTAIN CRAIG (Down, E.) said it seemed to some of them that the hon. and learned Gentleman was striving to hide as long as he possibly could the exact expenditure which this Bill was going to cost the country, and he thought he would be the last person to cast any blame upon them for striving to get from him something more reasonable than the explanation with which he had just favoured them. He thought it was extremely lame of the hon. and learned Gentleman to twit his hon. friend below him with not being able to produce a Bill on all fours with the present measure in which there had been a debate upon the Financial Resolution to be found in *Hansard*. He might have given a somewhat better explanation if he disagreed with the Amendment which the hon.

Baronet had moved, because, after all, although the Bill to which his hon. friend referred was not a Bill of exactly the same nature, still it was one which necessitated a Money Resolution practically word for word the same as that under discussion. The Amendment was also to all intents and purposes the same, and surely the legal mind of the hon. and learned Gentlemen would recognise that there was a very close likeness between the two cases. He wished to know what had occurred to change the mind of front bench occupants, since upon the Aliens Bill they voted in one direction, and now came down to the House without one single word of explanation to eat their own words by voting in another. He did not accuse the hon. and learned Gentleman of breaking the ordinary rules and regulations of the House in the ordinary sense of the word in not putting his Resolution on the Paper, but what he did say was that as the present members of the Government felt so strongly on the subject in the year 1904, it would not have been outside their capabilities to put on the Notice Paper some approximate statement of the cost in this instance. Although in doing so they might have departed slightly from the rules of the House in such matters, they would not have found a single Member on those benches to object to such a trivial divergence. They did not ask the hon. and learned Gentleman in any way to infringe the rules in carrying through such an ordinary Resolution, but they did ask him to throw a little light on the dark secret. The hon. and learned Gentleman had admitted that neither he nor his friend representing the Treasury had the slightest idea of how much the amount wanted would be. If such a statement had been placed on the Notice Paper they would at least have the satisfaction of knowing what they had to deal with, and it would not have been necessary for his hon. friend to have moved the Amendment. There had, however, been one very good result already of the debate, because the other day, his hon. friend having moved an Amendment in regard to £4,000, the hon. and learned Gentleman, he presumed in order to disarm suspicion and criticism, said that it was hoped that the gentleman who was to fill the office would take £3,000, and the debate that day had had the effect of inducing the hon. and learned Gentleman in reply to his hon. friend, although the Amendment standing on the Paper named £3,000, to say that he thought he would be able to get an eminent gentleman for a lesser sum than that. He dared say that if the Resolution had to go through another stage in the House they would get the hon. and learned Gentleman to reduce still further the salary to be paid to the Public Prosecutor. At all events he thought these financial matters should be presented to the House in a more businesslike way in future. They had, however, got valuable information from the hon. and learned Gentleman, and he supposed that every time the question arose the gentleman who aspired to the post, or the gentleman who was in the view of the hon. and learned Gentleman, would get cheaper and cheaper, because he went down from £4,000 to £3,000 on the last occasion, and that day he had gone down from £3,000 to £2,000. That at all events proved that these debates upon Financial Resolutions had the effect of impressing a little economy on this spendthrift Government. Then the hon. and learned Gentleman said in answer to the noble Lord that they were in possession of just exactly the same information as the Treasury. That was a very serious admission, because no one in the House could say that they had the slightest information whatever on the subject. Therefore the hon. and learned Gentleman admitted that the Treasury were backing him up in a matter of which they also knew absolutely nothing. The cursory statement which they had from the hon. and learned Gentleman when the matter was last before them was as unsatisfactory as his statement that day; it amounted to this, that the House of Commons and the officials of the Treasury, as far as the machinery and the backbone of the Bill, the paying out of the money, were concerned, were absolutely in the dark. Another important point was that the hon. and learned Gentleman told them that the Bill would indirectly provoke appeals.

SIR W. ROBSON: I did not use the expression "provoke." I said it would lead to appeals.

CAPTAIN CRAIG said that that admission made the matter all the more serious, because in that case the Public Prosecutor might not only have to appoint one assistant but two or three. If the Bill was going to instigate appeals throughout the country they ought certainly, on a Money Resolution, to have some figures before them. They ought to be told the number of criminal appeals during the last ten or fifteen years, and whether the hon. and learned Gentleman expected that that number would be increased by 5 or 10 per cent. or whatever the figure was. There would have been something logical and tangible then for them to deal with. The point was that the hon. and learned Gentleman himself had indicated that this measure would create a large amount of work for the officials he was appointing and paying by this Resolution, and yet he had no information to give them, nor had the Treasury. He should certainly vote with his hon. friend as a protest against the way in which business was being carried on.

MR. COCHRANE (Ayrshire, N.) thought his hon. friend the Member for the City of London had done a great service to the interests of economy in calling attention to the haphazard way in which the hon. and learned Gentleman had produced his Financial Resolution on which this Bill was founded. They were told, as he understood, that the duties which would be imposed by the Bill would be very numerous and very onerous, and would take up so much time that it would be impossible that the work could be done in the office of the Solicitor to the Treasury. Under the Act of 1884 constituting the office of the Solicitor to the Treasury and giving him control of these prosecutions, that official had been able to appoint any number of Assistant Solicitors with the same power as himself to carry out the work. When he ventured to call attention to this point on a previous stage and pointed out that a Committee had reported in favour of combining the offices of Public Prosecutor and Solicitor to the Treasury, the answer he got was that the Report of 1884 was many years ago, and that the Act based upon it was also many years ago. The hon. and learned Gentleman insisted, however, as in the case of all Radical legislation, on going still further back, and instead of being satisfied with the Act of 1884 he re-enacted the Act of 1879 which was condemned by the Report of the Committee in 1884 on account of its extravagant expense. The two offices were combined in 1884 and now the hon. and learned Gentleman proposed again to separate them. He desired to call attention to the expense that would be incurred by his so doing. He gathered from the hon. and learned Gentleman that the expense would be very great because of the new labours which would be thrown on these gentlemen. But they were told there was to be only one Director of Public Prosecutions. He therefore suggested that the expense in setting up these various offices, and all the details necessary, of shorthand writers and clerks merely to assist one Director of Public Prosecutions, appeared to be very extravagant. With regard to the salary of the Director himself let them not err on the side of undue economy. If it was necessary to set up this officer they should at any rate pay him well. The Public Prosecutor would be a gentleman upon whom the greatest responsibility would rest, and it would be in the interests of neither economy nor justice that a gentleman placed in that position should have an inadequate salary. He was sure his hon. friend the junior Member for the City of London would not criticise in a hostile manner an adequate salary for this gentleman. What they thought was that when a Financial Resolution of this character was brought in there ought to be some details of the expenditure it was expected would be incurred.

MR. CLAUDE HAY having, as he said, followed this matter from the first, expressed considerable sympathy with the Attorney-General, who by the speeches he had made upon the subject had placed himself in an impossible position. First of all, the hon. and learned Gentleman said he was unable to form any estimate. Had any communication passed since between the hon. and learned Gentleman and the Treasury? Because if so, he must now have some further information beyond that which the House possessed. Having said that he was unable to form an estimate of the cost he now said he only intended to appoint one Director of Public Prosecutions. He could tell pretty well what that would cost.

CAPTAIN CRAIG called attention to the fact that forty Members were not present. House counted; and forty Members being found present—

MR. CLAUDE HAY said it would not be difficult for the Government to bring in a Supplementary Estimate if in the next six months it was found necessary owing to the increase of work to increase the staff. It was patent that this Government had no title to be called an economical Government, when on this, the first day of the financial year, they brought in a Resolution of such an indefinite character. What he was anxious to know, and he would ask the Solicitor-General to afford the House the information, was whether the Government had in their mind the gentleman they intended to appoint to this position. If they were only going to appoint one Director they obviously must know the amount of salary they proposed to offer, and, therefore, the ambiguity need not apply to the Resolution. When the question was before the House on a previous occasion the Attorney-General candidly confessed that he had not read the extremely powerful Report of the Committee on the question of the separation of these offices. But the time had arrived when the hon. and learned Gentleman should give serious attention to the opinions expressed in that Report, signed as it was by Sir William Harcourt and other eminent Members of the Party opposite and of other sides of the House, most of them being ex-Ministers. The matter had been regarded by the Government as a small one, yet four years had hardly elapsed since on a similar question in connection with the Aliens Bill four Members of the present Government, beginning with the Chancellor of the Exchequer, spoke very strongly upon the subject and voted against the Resolution. The present Resolution was on all fours with that brought in by the late Government in connection with the Aliens Bill. The Attorney-General now told the House that he could not fix the figure because he could not tell how the work would develope and what would be the amount of staff required. That was exactly the case in the Aliens Bill. It was impossible to state how many officers would be required or of what the equipment at the various ports would consist. The Government of the day advanced practically the same argument as that put forward by the hon. and learned Gentleman, and the present Chancellor of the Exchequer was most emphatic on the necessity of fixing the amount of the Estimate. If the principles applied by the Government in this financial Resolution were applied to private business undertakings, in a very short time the undertakings would be bankrupt. It was regarded by hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite as a small matter, but it was a matter of vital principle of the business management that should be applied to the whole of the work of the Government.

Question put.

The House divided: Ayes, 70; Noes, 272. (Division List No. 63.)

AYES.

Acland-Hood,Rt Hn.Sir Alex.F
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Ashley, W. W.
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt.Hn. Sir H.
Balcarres, Lord
Baldwin, Stanley
Barrie, H. T. (Londonderry,N.)
Beach,Hn.Michael Hugh Hicks
Beckett, Hon. Gervase
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bowles, G. Stewart
Bridgeman, W. Clive
Campbell, Rt. Hon. J. H. M.
Carlile, E. Hildred
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord John P. Joicey-
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Courthope, G. Loyd
Craig,Charles Curtis(Antrim, S.
Craik, Sir Henry
Dixon-Hartland,Sir Fred Dixon
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Faber, George Denison (York)
Faber, Capt. W. V. (Hants, W.)
Fardell, Sir T. George
Fetherstonhaugh, Godfrey
Forster, Henry William
Gibbs, G. A. (Bristol, West)
Gretton, John
Guinness, Walter Edward
Hamilton, Marquess of

Hardy, Laurence(Kent,Ashf'rd
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Helmsley, Viscount
Hill, Sir Clement
Hunt, Rowland
Kennaway,Rt.Hn. Sir John H.
Lane-Fox, G. R.
Lee,Arthur H.(Hants,Fareham
Lockwood,Rt.Hn. Lt.-Col.A. R
Long. Rt.Hn.Walter(Dublin,S)
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
M'Calmont, Colonel James
Magnus, Sir Philip
Mason, James F. (Windsor)
Meysey-Thompson, E. C.
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Moore, William
Morpeth, Viscount
Parkes, Ebenezer
Pease,Herbert Pike(Darlington
Randles, Sir John Scurrah
Rawlinson,John Frederick Peel
Remnant, James Farquharson
Roberts, S. (Sheffield,Ecclesall)
Salter, Arthur Clavell
Sheffield,Sir Berkeley GeorgeD.
Smith, Abel H. (Hertford,East)
Starkey, John R.
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Thomson,W.Mitchell- (Lanark)
Thornton, Percy M.
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Valentia, Viscount
Williams, Col. R. (Dorset, W.)
Wilson,A. Stanley (York, E.R.)
Winterton, Earl
Younger, George

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir Frederick Banbury and Captain Craig.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork,N.E.)
Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Agnew, George William
Alden, Percy
Allen, Charles P. (Stroud)
Ambrose, Robert
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Asquith,Rt.Hn. Herbert Henry
Astbury, John Meir
Atherley-Jones, L.
Baker, Joseph A. (Finsbury,E.)
Baring, Godfrey (Isle of Wight)
Barker, John
Barlow, Sir John E. (Somerset)
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Barnard, E. B.
Barnes, G. N.
Barry, RedmondJ. (Tyrone,N
Beck, A. Cecil
Bellairs, Carlyon
Benn,W.(T'w'r Hamlets,S.Geo.
Bennett, E. N.
Bethell,Sir J.H.(Essex,Romf'rd
Bethell, T. R. (Essex, Maldon)
Birrell, Rt. Hon. Augustine
Black, Arthur W.
Boland, John
Bowerman, C. W.
Brace, William
Branch, James
Bright, J. A.
Brocklehurst, W. B.
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burt, Rt. Hon. Thomas
Buxton, Rt.Hn.Sydney Charles
Byles, William Pollard
Cameron, Robert
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Cawley, Sir Frederick
Chance, Frederick William
Channing, Sir Francis Allston
Cherry, Rt. Hon. R. R.
Clancy, John Joseph
Cleland, J. W.
Clough, William
Clynes, J. R.
Cobbold, Felix Thornley
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Cooper, G. J.
Corbett,C H(Sussex,E.Grinst'd
Cornwall, Sir Edwin A.
Cotton, Sir H. J. S.
Cowan, W. H.
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, Sir William Randal
Crooks, William
Crosfield, A. H.
Curran, Peter Francis
Davies, Ellis William (Eifion)
Davies, Timothy (Fulham)
Davies, W. Howell (Bristol, S.)
Delany, William
Devlin, Joseph
Dobson, Thomas W.
Donelan, Captain A.
Duckworth, James
Duncan,C.(Barrow-in-Furness
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)
Dunne,Major E.Martin(Walsall
Edwards, Sir Francis (Radnor)
Erskine, David C.
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Essex, R. W.
Esslemont, George Birnie
Evans, Sir Samuel T.
Everett, R. Lacey
Faber, G. H. (Boston)
Fenwick, Charles
Ffrench, Peter
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Foster, Rt. Hon. Sir Walter
Fuller, John Michael F.
Fullerton, Hugh
Furness, Sir Christopher
Gibb, James (Harrow)
Gilhooly, James
Gill, A. H.
Gladstone,Rt.Hn.Herbert John
Glen-Coats, Sir T.(Renfrew,W.
Glover, Thomas
Gooch, George Peabody (Bath)
Greenwood, G. (Peterborough)
Gulland, John W.
Gurdon,Rt Hn.SirW.Brampton
Gwynn, Stephen Lucius
Hall, Frederick
Halpin, J.
Hardy, George A. (Suffolk
Hart-Davies, T.
Harvey, A. G. C. (Rochdale)
Harvey,W.E.(Derbyshire,N.E.
Haslam, James (Derbyshire)
Hazleton, Richard
Healy, Timothy Michael
Hedges, A. Paget
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Herbert, T. Arnold (Wycombe)
Higham, John Sharp
Hobart, Sir Robert
Hodge, John
Holland, Sir William Henry
Holt, Richard Durning
Horniman, Emslie John
Horridge, Thomas Gardner
Howard, Hon. Godfrey
Hudson, Walter
Hutton, Alfred Eddison
Idris, T. H. W.
Illingworth, Percy H.
Jacoby, Sir James Alfred
Jardine, Sir J.
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Johnson, W. (Nuneaton)
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jowett, F. W.
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kelley, George D.
Kilbride, Denis
King, Alfred John (Knutsford)
Laidlaw, Robert
Lambert, George
Lamont, Norman
Leese,Sir Joseph F.(Accrington
Lehmann, R. C.
Levy, Sir Maurice
Lloyd-George, Rt. Hon. David
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
Lyell, Charles Henry
Maclean, Donald
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
Macpherson, J. T.
MacVeagh, Jeremiah (Down, S.
MacVeigh,Charles (Donegal,E.)
M'Callum, John M.
M'Crae, George
M'Kenna, Rt. Hon. Reginald
M'Killop, W.
M'Laren, Sir C. B. (Leicester)
M'Laren, H. D. (Stafford, W.)
Maddison, Frederick
Mallet, Charles E.
Markham, Arthur Basil
Marnham, F. J.
Mason, A. E. W. (Coventry)
Masterman, C. F. G.
Meagher, Michael
Meehan,Francis E.(Leitrim,N.)
Meehan, Patrick A.(Queen'sCo.
Money, L. G. Chiozza
Montagu, E. S.
Montgomery, H. G.
Mooney, J. J.

Morgan, G. Hay (Cornwall)
Morse, L. L.
Morton, Alpheus Cleophas
Muldoon, John
Murnaghan, George
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Napier, T. B.
Nicholls, George
Nicholson, Charles N (Doncast'r
Nolan, Joseph
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Doherty, Philip
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Grady, J.
O'Kelly, James (Roscommon, N
O'Malley, William
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
O'Shee, James John
Partington, Oswald
Pearson, W. H. M. (Suffolk, Eye)
Perks, Robert William
Philipps, Col. Ivor (S'thampton
Pickersgill, Edward Hare
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, C. E. (Edinb'gh, Central)
Price, Robert John (Norfolk, E.)
Priestley, W. E. B. (Bradford, E.)
Pullar, Sir Robert
Radford, G. H.
Rea, Russell (Gloucester)
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford
Rees, J. D.
Rendall, Athelstan
Richards, Thomas (W. Monm'th
Richardson, A.
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roberts, Charles H. (Lincoln)
Roberts, G. H. (Norwich)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robertson, J. M. (Tyneside)
Robinson, S.
Roche, John (Galway, East)
Roe, Sir Thomas
Rowlands, J.
Runciman, Walter
Russell, T. W.
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Scott, A. H. (Ashton under Lyne
Sears, J. E.
Seddon, J.
Seely, Colonel
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Shaw, Rt. Hon. T. (Hawick B.)
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Silcock, Thomas Ball
Smeaton, Donald Mackenzie
Stanger, H. Y.
Stanley, Hn. A. Lyulph (Chesh.)
Stewart, Halley (Greenock)
Strachey, Sir Edward
Straus, B. S. (Mile End)
Summerbell, T.
Taylor, John W. (Durham)
Tennant, Sir Edward (Salisbury
Tennant, H. J. (Berwickshire)
Thomas, David Alfred (Merthyr
Torrance, Sir A. M.
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Verney, F. W.
Villiers, Ernest Amherst
Wadsworth, J.
Walsh, Stephen
Wardle, George J.
Waring, Walter
Wason, Rt. Hn. E (Clackmannan
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney)
Waterlow, D. S.
Watt, Henry A.
Wedgwood, Josiah C.
Whitbread, Howard
White, Sir George (Norfolk)
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whitehead, Rowland
Whitley, John Henry (Halifax
Whittaker, Sir Thomas Palmer
Wiles, Thomas
Williamson, A.
Wilson, Hon. G. G. (Hull, W.)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid)
Wilson, P. W. (St. Pancras, S.)
Wilson, W. T. (Westhoughton)
Winfrey, R.
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Whiteley and Mr. Herbert Lewis.

Resolution agreed to.

PROSECUTION OF OFFENCES (AMENDMENT) BILL.

Order for Committee read.

The Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence, owing to indisposition, of the Chairman of Ways and Means.

Considered in Committee.

[Mr. CALDWELL (Lanarkshire, Mid.) in the Chair.]

Clause 1:

MR. CLAUDE HAY moved the omission, after "The provisions of Section 2 of the Prosecution of Offences Act, 1884," of the words "which unite the office of Director of Public Prosecutions with that of the Treasury Solicitor." He contended that the words were wholly unnecessary, and the reference given would be entirely misleading, seeing that the Act of 1884 was repealed *in toto* in the schedule of the Bill. Another part of the Act of 1884 dealt with the office of the Director of Public Prosecutions, and the reference to a number of provisions in that Act was meaningless. It was very surprising that the words should have been allowed to remain in the Bill, but he supposed the Attorney-General had been occupied in other work, or he would not have overlooked such a drafting matter. He hoped the hon. and learned Gentleman would accept the Amendment. He had the whole of the references, but he did not want to occupy the time of the House. If, however, the Amendment was resisted, he would be obliged to make further remarks.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 1, line 6, to leave out from '1884' to the word 'shall,' in line 7."—*Mr. Claude Hay.*

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the clause."

SIR W. ROBSON said the words were not unnecessary; they were there simply as a matter of convenient explanation in order to save any one who read the Bill from the necessity of referring to the Act of 1884. That was the whole reason. The reference was explanatory and nothing else.

SIR F. BANBURY said he would not put himself in antagonism on a legal point to the hon. and learned Gentleman, but he thought the words instead of simplifying the matter and helping lawyers to understand it would have exactly the contrary effect. The clause of the Act of 1884 to which the reference related was as follows—

> "On and after the passing of this Act, appointments made in pursuance of the principal Act are revoked, and the person for the time being holding the office of Solicitor for the affairs of Her Majesty's Treasury shall be the Director of Public Prosecutions and perform the duties and have the powers of such Director."

Then Section 3 of the Solicitors Act of 1876 authorised any Assistant Solicitor for the affairs of Her Majesty's Treasury to act on behalf of the Solicitor to the Treasury in his capacity of Director of Public Prosecutions. They knew the ingenuity of the legal mind and they knew the little points that were taken when a case was before the Law Courts so that either delay was caused or an end put altogether to the proceedings. It might be held that the second paragraph of Clause 2 of the Prosecution of Offences Act did not unite the offices of Director of Public Prosecutions and Treasury Solicitor, but only authorised the Assistant Solicitor to assist the Director of Public Prosecutions.

VISCOUNT HELMSLEY (Yorkshire, N.R., Thirsk) called attention to the fact that forty Members were not present.

*THE DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: I have already ascertained that there are more than forty Members present.

MR. CLAUDE HAY: Not since the House has been in Committee.

*THE DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: It does not matter. Besides that there has been a recent division.

SIR F. BANBURY said they wanted to make the meaning of the clause as clear as possible. He was inclined to think the schedule contradicted these words; the two were not consistent. If these words were in, the schedule ought to be amended, but if they were cut out the schedule could be left as it was. The hon. and learned Gentleman had better accept the Amendment because then they would not have to make any alteration in the schedule. It had just struck him that the reason why the hon. and learned Gentleman would not accept the Amendment was, possibly, that his interpretation was correct. The hon. and learned Gentleman told them he only intended to appoint one Director, but they might anticipate a certain number of appeals—

*THE DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: That has nothing to do with the question, which is whether these words, which are merely explanatory of the section, should be in or not. They have no enacting effect and the section is repealed by the schedule.

SIR F. BANBURY said it was he who had called attention to the fact that the schedule took all the words out and there was no reason in leaving them in unless there was some ulterior object. It might be that when they came to the schedule the hon. and learned Gentleman might mean to amend it.

*THE DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: These words cannot be put beyond their definite meaning which is explanatory of the contents of the section. They are not enacting words.

SIR F. BANBURY said that was quite true, but if these words were left in would the second paragraph of the repeal section have any effect or not? If it had the same effect whether the words were in or out, the Amendment should be accepted, because it had always been held that in an Act of Parliament the fewer words put in the better, and that words should not be put in unless they had an object and meaning. These words had no object and no meaning, and the effect would be exactly the same whether they were in or out. He hoped the Amendment would be pressed to a division.

CAPTAIN CRAIG thought the hon. and learned Gentleman ought to accept the Amendment for a reason which had not been touched on. It certainly struck him, on looking at the wording, that it was a matter more of Memoranda that might be attached to the Bill, than of the wording of the Bill itself. He took it that the Attorney-General in drafting the section took it upon himself to lay down that Section 2 of the Prosecution of Offences Act, 1884, united the offices of Director of Public Prosecutions and Treasury Solicitor. He took it that that was a matter for discussion, and not a matter to set out in a clause of that Bill. If the hon. and learned Gentleman was correct in his decision that the words were not necessary and were merely put there in order to be a convenience to people, was there not a great fear that the very effect of leaving the words in would lead to endless litigation in the future? If the words were practically an explanatory note, and if the hon. and learned Gentleman intended to insist that the section united the two offices, it might be just as reasonable for him to go on and explain what else Section 2 did. Was the Bill to be overburdened with unofficial statements of that sort? If the Bill was drafted in that way, if there was as much surface matter running through it as in the first few lines, there must be some fault somewhere. He could not conceive the hon. and learned Gentleman whose colleague appeared to be giving way on the matter, stating that the words were unnecessary, and at the same time that he must have them in the Bill. If the words were unnecessary they should be struck out. If they were necessary the hon. and learned Gentleman should explain more fully why they were necessary. The greatest possible care should be taken in introducing extraneous matter. He should certainly vote with his hon. friend in order to elicit a more reasonable excuse for including the words.

MR. CLAUDE HAY said the Attorney-General had not really given any explanation but had made his case worse. He said the words were in the nature of an explanation, but they only partially described the section to which they referred and did not give a true index to its purport. Whenever they proposed to put words in they were told they could not be accepted because the great thing in an Act of Parliament was to have simplicity and as few words as possible. Now they were told they were wrong, and that these words which were meaningless and misleading must be left in. It was quite clear that the Bill had been prepared in a very slipshod way, with the idea, he supposed, that it did not much matter because it would be put through the House without discussion. He was glad to think they were giving this measure and would give all similar measures close attention, so that they would not see things run hurriedly through the House with bad and slipshod wording, giving trouble thereafter and putting the country to unnecessary expense in ascertaining in Courts of Law the proper meaning of words in Acts of Parliament. It was all very well for the Attorney-General to give his own interpretation of the words and the necessity for having them in the Bill. They all had proper respect for the hon. and learned Gentleman's opinion, but the Judges in interpreting the Act would not be guided by the words that had fallen from him. He appealed to the hon. and learned Gentleman to meet an absolutely reasonable and simplifying Amendment.

SIR W. ROBSON said the difficulty complained of could not arise because the whole of the section in question was repealed in the schedule.

VISCOUNT HELMSLEY said the words proposed were intended to make the matter clear and to obviate the disadvantages which always arose from legislation by reference. The inclusion of some such words as those contained in the Amendment, he thought, was desirable. He could not understand why the clause did not start by saying that the offices of Director of Public Prosecutions and Solicitor of the Treasury should no longer be united. That would have been far simpler and the clause would then have commenced by saying exactly what was intended, without containing this peculiar parenthesis, the intention of which they appreciated, but which he was informed many lawyers considered would lead to ambiguity in future. Would it not be possible for the Attorney-General to meet the views of his hon. friend by undertaking at a subsequent stage to redraft the beginning of the clause so as to make it clear what its object was, and then it would not be open to the objection which had been raised.

THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. GEORGE WHITELEY, Yorkshire, W.R., Pudsey) made an appeal to the Opposition to let this Bill go through. As the House was aware it was originally the intention of the Government to take the Housing Bill that day, but owing to strong representations from hon. Gentlemen opposite they agreed to postpone it, and he came to an agreement with the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Somerset that instead of taking the Housing Bill he should give them the first four Orders on the Paper. The fourth Order, the Children Bill, was of some importance, and a great many hon. Members wished to discuss it. It would be very much to the convenience of the House if they could get to that measure and shorten the present discussion.

SIR F. BANBURY said he was not aware that any such arrangement had been made, and he did not think it was right for the right hon. Gentleman to ask them to curtail the discussion upon an important Bill because another important measure was to come on later. He was prepared to move to report progress. [Cries of "No, no."] They had a right to discuss every Bill and now the Party of freedom of speech, the Radical Party, were laying down that Bills were not to be discussed, but passed without discussion in order to enable them to bring on a Bill to which they attached importance. The proper course to take was to report progress and resume the discussion on some other occasion. He begged to move to report progress.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report progress and ask leave to sit again."—(*Sir F. Banbury*).

MR. CLAUDE HAY said he must protest against what the right hon. Gentleman had just said. He had just said that before 8.15 some four or five Bills were to be rushed through the House. He hoped that afternoon would be a lesson to the Government in thinking that they were going to ride roughshod over the liberties of hon. Members in respect of important Bills affecting the rights and liberties of the subject.

MR. GEORGE WHITELEY said he only intervened to mention the arrangement which had been come to. It would cause great inconvenience if they could not adhere to agreements arrived at between the Whips.

CAPTAIN CRAIG said he was not aware that any arrangement had been come to. They were, however, in the hands of the Patronage Secretary, and he would ask him to postpone this Bill. The other Bills alluded to were not important, and they might be discussed on some other occasion. There was a desire on the part of the Opposition to discuss the Amendments to this Bill on the Paper, and a few hours some other day might suffice. They might even drop one of the Bills which had proved so unpopular.

SIR F. BANBURY said he would only ask for an hour upon some other occasion.

SIR W. ROBSON said it was of the utmost importance that this Department should be authorised by 18th April, and by that time they should be able to make not anticipatory but authoritative arrangements. The Bill had been accepted by right hon. Gentlemen on the Front Opposition Bench and both sides of the House were equally anxious that it should pass forthwith. He hoped the Committee would not accede to the Motion to report progress

MR. RAWLINSON (Cambridge University said the Bill was urgent and he agreed that it was necessary if the Criminal Appeal Act was to work at all. He hoped his hon. friends would not press the Motion for the Adjournment of the debate, although he sympathised with the criticisms in regard to the financial Resolution.

MR. ELLIS GRIFFITH (Anglesey) asked the Chief Opposition Whip to exercise a little supervision and control over his followers [" Oh, oh ! "]

MR. RAWLINSON : That is not the way to get it. We are not sheep.

MR. ELLIS GRIFFITH said the Bill was urgent, and although their appeals to hon. Gentlemen opposite had not succeeded he was sure the appeal of the right hon. Gentleman would not be made in vain. The debate up to the present had been of a most frivolous character.

MR. CLAUDE HAY asked if the word " frivolous " was Parliamentary ?

*THE DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN : It is not unparliamentary, but it is irrelevant.

SIR F. BANBURY said the hon. and learned Member for Anglesey had not poured oil on the troubled waters when he described the discussion as frivolous. With regard to the agreement which had been referred to, no man was more anxious than he was to carry out any arrangement entered into by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Somerset. The Amendments to be moved on the Opposition side of the House would not prevent the Children Bill being taken before 8.15. All the effect of considering these Amendments would be to curtail the discussion on the Children Bill. Why should the Members of the Opposition finish their discussion on the Committee stage of this Bill, because hon. Gentlemen on the Government side wished to discuss another Bill ? They should bring pressure to bear on their Government to give them sufficient time for the discussion of the Bill in which they were interested.

MR. CLAUDE HAY said that any arrangement arrived at between the right hon. Gentlemen would be loyally carried out on that side of the House, but the present situation did not arise from anything done by them. They were doing their duty in discussing the Bill now before the Committee, and if the discussion prevented the consideration of other Bills, the blame was upon the right hon. Gentlemen opposite. He thought the Government should not be so greedy ; they should treat their opponents with some regard for the rights and liberties of private Members. He was greatly interested in the Children Bill, and he would like to have the opportunity of bringing forward some points in the Second Reading debate. The measure was so important that he doubted whether there would be sufficient time for its discussion that day. He resented the remarks made by the hon. Gentleman opposite. When the hon. Gentleman was in opposition in the last Parliament he never considered the convenience of their Government, but took the course which he thought proper in advancing his views. He appealed to the Patronage Secretary not to try when framing the Order Paper to rush through Bills of this character. The discussion of matters of the greatest importance was interfered with when they endeavoured to do too much in one day.

SIR F. BANBURY asked leave to withdraw his Motion.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Original Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 282 ; Noes, 71. (Division List No. 64)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Acland, Francis Dyke
Adkins, W. Ryland D.
Agnew, George William
Alden, Percy
Allen, Charles P. (Stroud)
Ambrose, Robert
Armstrong, W. C. Heaton
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Asquith, Rt. Hn. Herbert Henry
Atherley-Jones, L.
Baker, Sir John (Portsmouth)
Baker, Joseph A. (Finsbury, E.)
Baring, Godfrey (Isle of Wight)
Barker, John
Barlow, Sir John E. (Somerset)
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)

Barnes, G. N.
Barry, Redmond J.(Tyrone,N.)
Beale, W. P.
Beauchamp, E.
Beck, A. Cecil
Bellairs, Carlyon
Benn,W.(T'w'r Hamlets,S.Geo.
Bennett, E. N.
Bethell,SirJ.H.(Essex,Romf'rd
Black, Arthur W.
Boland, John
Boulton, A. C. F.
Bowerman, C. W.
Brace, William
Bramsdon, T. A.
Branch, James
Bright, J. A.
Brocklehurst, W. B.
Brodie, H. C.
Bryce, J. Annan
Burns, Rt. Hon. John
Burt, Rt. Hon. Thomas
Byles, William Pollard
Cameron, Robert
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Cawley, Sir Frederick
Chance, Frederick William
Channing, Sir Francis Allston
Cherry, Rt. Hon. R. R.
Cleland, J. W.
Clough, William
Clynes, J. R.
Cobbold, Felix Thornley
Collins,Sir Wm.J.(S.Pancras,W
Compton-Rickett, Sir J.
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Cooper, G. J.
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Corbett,C H(Sussex,E.Grinst'd
Cornwall, Sir Edwin A.
Cotton, Sir H. J. S.
Cowan, W. H.
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, Sir William Randal
Crooks, William
Crosfield, A. H.
Davies, Ellis William (Eifion)
Davies, Timothy (Fulham)
Davies, W. Howell (Bristol, S.)
Delany, William
Devlin, Joseph
Dickinson,W. H.(St.Pancras,N
Dillon, John
Dobson, Thomas W.
Donelan, Captain A.
Duckworth, James
Duncan, C. (Barrow-in-Furness
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)
Dunne,Major E.Martin(Walsall
Edwards, Sir Francis (Radnor)
Erskine, David C.
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Essex, R. W.
Esslemont, George Birnie
Evans, Sir Samuel T.
Everett, R. Lacey
Faber, G. H. (Boston)
Fenwick, Charles
Ferguson, R. C. Munro
Ffrench, Peter
Fiennes, Hon. Eustace
Findlay, Alexander
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Foster, Rt. Hon. Sir Walter
Freeman-Thomas, Freeman
Gibb, James (Harrow)
Gilhooly, James
Gill, A. H.
Gladstone,Rt.Hn.HerbertJohn
Glen-Coats Sir T. (Renfrew, W
Glover, Thomas
Gooch, George Peabody (Bath)
Greenwood, G. (Peterborough)
Griffith, Ellis J.
Gulland, John W.
Gurdon,RtHn.SirW.Brampton
Hall, Frederick
Halpin, J.
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Lewis
Hardy, George A. (Suffolk)
Hart-Davies, T.
Harvey, A. G. C. (Rochdale)
Harvey,W. E.(Derbyshire,N.E.
Haslam, James (Derbyshire)
Haslam, Lewis (Monmouth)
Hazleton, Richard
Healy, Timothy Michael
Hedges, A. Paget
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Henderson, J.M.(Aberdeen,W.)
Henry, Charles S.
Herbert, T. Arnold (Wycombe)
Higham, John Sharp
Hobart, Sir Robert
Hodge, John
Holland, Sir William Henry
Holt, Richard Durning
Horniman, Emslie John
Horridge, Thomas Gardner
Howard, Hon. Geoffrey
Hudson, Walter
Hutton, Alfred Eddison
Idris, T. H. W.
Illingworth, Percy H.
Jacoby, Sir James Alfred
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Johnson, W. (Nuneaton)
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jowett, F. W.
Joyce, Michael
Kavanagh, Walter M.
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kelley, George D.
Kilbride, Denis
King, Alfred John (Knutsford)
Laidlaw, Robert
Lambert, George
Lamont, Norman
Lehmann, R. C.
Levy, Sir Maurice
Lloyd-George, Rt. Hon. David
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
Lyell, Charles Henry
Maclean, Donald
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
Macpherson, J. T.
MacVeagh, Jeremiah (Down, S.
MacVeigh,Charles (Donegal,E.)
M'Crae, George
M'Kenna, Rt. Hon. Reginald
M'Killop, W.
M'Laren, Sir C. B. (Leicester)
M'Laren, H. D. (Stafford, W.)
M'Micking, Major G.
Maddison, Frederick
Mallet, Charles E.
Markham, Arthur Basil
Mason, A. E. W. (Coventry)
Masterman, C. F. G.
Meagher, Michael
Meehan,Francis E. (Leitrim, N.
Meehan,Patrick A.(Queen's Co.
Money, L. G. Chiozza
Montagu, E. S.
Mooney, J. J.
Morgan, G. Hay (Cornwall)
Morrell, Philip
Morse, L. L.
Morton, Alpheus Cleophas
Muldoon, John
Murnaghan, George
Napier, T. B.
Nicholls, George
Nicholson,Charles N.(Doncast'r
Nolan, Joseph
Norman, Sir Henry
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor,James (Wicklow, W.)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Doherty, Philip
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Grady, J.
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
O'Shee, James John
Partington, Oswald
Pearson,W.H.M. (Suffolk, Eye)
Philipps, Col. Ivor (S'thampton
Philipps, Owen C. (Pembroke)
Pickersgill, Edward Hare
Price,Robert John (Norfolk, E.
Priestley,W.E.B. (Bradford,E.)
Pullar, Sir Robert
Radford, G. H.
Rea, Russell (Gloucester)
Rea, Walter Russell (Scarboro'
Rees, J. D.
Rendall, Athelstan
Richards,Thomas (W.Monm'th
Richards,T. F. (Wolverh'mpt'n
Richardson, A
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roberts, Charles H. (Lincoln)
Roberts, G. H. (Norwich)
Robertson, J. M. (Tyneside)
Robinson, S.
Robson, Sir William Snowdon
Roche, John (Galway, East)
Roe, Sir Thomas
Rowlands, J.
Runciman, Walter
Russell, T. W.
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Scott,A.H. (Ashton under Lyne
Sears, J. E.
Seaverns, J. H.
Seddon, J.
Seely, Colonel
Shackleton, David James

Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Shaw, Rt. Hon. T. (Hawick B.)
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Silcock, Thomas Ball
Smeaton, Donald Mackenzie
Spicer, Sir Albert
Stanger, H. Y.
Stanley, Hn. A. Lyulph (Chesh.)
Stewart, Halley (Greenock)
Strachey, Sir Edward
Straus, B. S. (Mile End)
Summerbell, T.
Taylor, John W. (Durham)
Tennant, H. J. (Berwickshire)
Thomas, David Alfred (Merthyr
Thomasson, Franklin
Thompson, J. W. H (Somerset, E
Tillett, Louis John
Tomkinson, James
Torrance, Sir A. M.
Toulmin, George
Verney, F. W.
Wadsworth, J.
Walsh, Stephen
Ward, W Dudley (Southampton
Wardle, George J.
Waring, Walter
Wason, Rt. Hn. E (Clackmannan
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney)
Waterlow, D. S.
Watt, Henry A.
Wedgwood, Josiah C.
Whitbread, Howard
White, Sir George (Norfolk)
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whitehead, Rowland
Whitley, John Henry (Halifax)
Whittaker, Sir Thomas Palmer
Wiles, Thomas
Williamson, A.
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid)
Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh. N.)
Wilson, P. W. (St. Pancras, S.)
Wilson, W. T. (Westhoughton)
Winfrey, R.
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Whiteley and Mr. Herbert Lewis.

NOES.

Acland-Hood, Rt. Hn Sir Alex. F
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Ashley, W. W.
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt. Hn. Sir H.
Balcarres, Lord
Baldwin, Stanley
Barrie, H. T. (Londonderry, N.)
Beach, Hn. Michael Hugh Hicks
Beckett, Hon. Gervase
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bowles, G. Stewart
Bridgeman, W. Clive
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord John P. Joicey-
Cecil, Lord R. (Marylebone, E.
Clive, Percy Archer
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Collings, Rt. Hn. J. (Birmingh'm
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Courthope, G. Loyd
Craig, Charles Curtis (Antrim, S.
Craig, Captain James (Down, E)
Craik, Sir Henry
Dixon-Hartland, Sir Fred Dixon
Douglas, Rt Hon. A. Akers-
Faber, George Denison (York)
Faber, Capt. W. V. (Hants, W.)
Fell, Arthur
Forster, Henry William
Gibbs, G. A. (Bristol, West)
Guinness, Walter Edward
Hamilton, Marquess of
Hardy, Laurence (Kent, Ashford
Helmsley, Viscount
Hill, Sir Clement
Hills, J. W.
Hunt, Rowland
Kennaway, Rt. Hn. Sir John H.
Kimber, Sir Henry
Lane-Fox, G. R.
Lockwood, Rt. Hn Lt.-Col. A. R.
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
MacCaw, William J. MacGeagh
M'Calmont, Colonel James
Magnus, Sir Philip
Mason, James F. (Windsor)
Moore, William
Morpeth, Viscount
Nicholson, Wm. G. (Petersfield)
Nield, Herbert
Randles, Sir John Scurrah
Rawlinson, John Frederick Peel
Remnant, James Farquharson
Roberts, S. (Sheffield, Ecclesall)
Salter, Arthur Clavell
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Sheffield, Sir Berkeley George D
Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, East
Smith, F. E. (Liverpool, Walton)
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Thomson, W. Mitchell- (Lanark)
Thornton, Percy M.
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Valentia, Viscount
Walker, Col. W. H. (Lancashire)
Williams, Col. R. (Dorset, W.)
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E. R.)
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
Younger, George

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Claude Hay and Sir Frederick Banbury.

SIR F. BANBURY said he did not wish to say more than a word or two in support of the next Amendment, the object of which was to restrict the number of Assistant Directors which the Treasury might appoint to one. The hon. and learned Gentleman had told the Committee that the new Department was going to have only a Director at present, and he thought that the Treasury should not have the power to appoint more than one Assistant Director without the sanction of the House of Commons. He begged to move.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 1, line 11, to leave out from the word 'appoint' to end of the sub-section, in order to insert the words 'with the sanction of the Treasury one Assistant Director.'"—(*Sir F. Banbury.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

SIR W. ROBSON said he was sorry he could not accept the Amendment. They could not tell exactly the volume of business that would come to the department under the new Act. The hon. Baronet suggested that there should be not more than one Assistant Director appointed even at the initial stage. He hoped that they would be able to go on for some time with one Assistant Director, but they could not tell what the volume of business might be five or six weeks or three months hence. There might be appeals in all the cases which came before the magistrates and quarter sessions throughout the country when the

Criminal Appeal Act came into operation. They began on the most modest scale possible, but they might within a few weeks have a very large accession of work, and they thought it better to have this provision in the Bill.

*MR. GEORGE FABER said that he would like to point out to the Attorney-General that under Section 3 of the Prosecution of Offenders Act of 1879, the Secretary of State might from time to time appoint such assistants as were necessary, but not exceeding six.

SIR W. ROBSON: As a fact only one assistant Public Prosecutor had been appointed.

*MR. GEORGE FABER said that that did not destroy his argument. In the Bill they were now discussing there was no such limit. The clause read that there should be appointed one Director and such number of Assistant Directors as the Treasury might sanction. He could not see why such an unlimited power of appointment should be granted to the Treasury. If the hon. and learned Gentleman said that only one was to be appointed, let him put in one. He did not think the Treasury should have a free hand in making these appointments. He did not know whether he would be in order in moving an Amendment to the Amendment but he would suggest as an Amendment the insertion of the words "not more than six in number."

MR. CLAUDE HAY said that no valid reason had been given by the Attorney-General why he should not accept the limit proposed by the hon. Baronet. If more than one Assistant Director was subsequently required the salaries could be put on the Supplementary Estimates. By adopting the Amendment of his hon. friend they would observe sound business principles and defer to the proper date the demand for the necessary money and so give an opportunity to the Government to show what staff was really required. He hoped the hon. Baronet would go to a division to show what the views of the Government were and what their policy was in regard to expenditure without any control by Parliament. It was evident from the statement of the Attorney-General that the Government could not indicate within £100,000 what amount of expenditure there would be under this Bill.

*MR. GEORGE FABER said he did not want to interfere with any arrangement that had been made for concluding the debate, and he would withdraw his suggestion as to an Amendment to the Amendment.

SIR W. ROBSON said he could only repeat what he had already said more than once, that he hoped there would not be a large number of appeals to begin with, but there might be within a measurable distance of time an immense accession of work to the Department. He could not suggest to the Treasury that they should limit the number of Assistant Directors to anything like six. Hon. Members must know that the Treasury would not give their sanction to the appointment of additional Assistant Directors without full consideration with the Law Officers of the Crown and without being fully satisfied that they were absolutely necessary.

*MR. GEORGE FABER said he did not suggest for a moment that six Assistant Directors should be appointed but that there should be a limit to the number.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 294; Noes, 65. (Division List No. 65.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E
Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Acland, Francis Dyke
Adkins, W. Ryland D.
Agnew, George William
Alden, Percy
Allen, Charles P. (Stroud)
Ambrose, Robert
Armstrong, W. C. Heaton
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Asquith, Rt. Hn. Herbert Henry
Atherley-Jones, L.
Baker, Sir John (Portsmouth)
Baring, Godfrey (Isle of Wight
Barker, John
Barlow, Sir John E. (Somerset)
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Barnes, G. N.
Barry, Redmond J. (Tyrone, N.)
Beale, W. P.
Beauchamp, E.

Beck, A. Cecil
Bellairs, Carlyon
Benn, W.(T'w'r Hamlets,S.Geo.
Bennett, E. N.
Bertram, Julius
Bethell,Sir J.H.(Essex,Romf'rd
Birrell, Rt. Hon. Augustine
Black, Arthur W.
Boland, John
Boulton, A. C. F.
Bowerman, C. W.
Brace, William
Bramsdon, T. A.
Branch, James
Bright, J. A.
Brocklehurst, W. B.
Brodie, H. C.
Bryce, J. Annan
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burns, Rt. Hon. John
Burt, Rt. Hon. Thomas
Buxton, Rt.Hn.Sydney Charles
Byles, William Pollard
Cameron, Robert
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Cawley, Sir Frederick
Chance, Frederick William
Channing, Sir Francis Allston
Cherry, Rt. Hon. R. R.
Clancy, John Joseph
Cleland, J. W.
Clough, William
Clynes, J. R.
Cobbold, Felix Thornley
Collins,Sir Wm.J.(S.Pancras,W
Compton-Rickett, Sir J.
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Corbett,C H(Sussex,E.Grinst'd
Cornwall, Sir Edwin A.
Cotton, Sir H. J. S.
Cowan, W. H.
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, Sir William Randal
Crooks, William
Crosfield, A. H.
Crossley, William J.
Davies, Ellis William (Eifion)
Davies, Timothy (Fulham)
Davies, W. Howell (Bristol, S.)
Delany, William
Devlin, Joseph
Dickinson,W. H.(St.Pancras,N.
Dillon, John
Dobson, Thomas W.
Donelan, Captain A.
Duckworth, James
Duncan,C.(Barrow-in-Furness
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)
Dunne,Major E.Martin(Walsall
Edwards, Sir Francis (Radnor)
Erskine, David C.
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Essex, R. W.
Esslemont, George Birnie
Evans, Sir Samuel T.
Everett, R. Lacey
Faber, G. H. (Boston)
Fenwick, Charles
Ferguson, R. C. Munro
Ffrench, Peter
Fiennes, Hon. Eustace

Findlay, Alexander
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Foster, Rt. Hon. Sir Walter
Fullerton, Hugh
Gibb, James (Harrow)
Gilhooly, James
Gill, A. H.
Gladstone,Rt.Hn.Herbert John
Glen-Coats, Sir T. (Renfrew,W.
Glover, Thomas
Gooch, George Peabody (Bath)
Grayson, Albert Victor
Greenwood, G. (Peterborough)
Griffith, Ellis J.
Gulland, John W.
Gurdon,Rt Hn.Sir W.Brampton
Hall, Frederick
Halpin, J.
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Lewis
Hardy, George A. (Suffolk)
Hart-Davies, T.
Harvey, A. G. C. (Rochdale)
Harvey,W. E.(Derbyshire,N.E.
Haslam, James (Derbyshire)
Haslam, Lewis (Monmouth)
Hazleton, Richard
Healy, Timothy Michael
Hedges, A. Paget
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Henderson, J.M.(Aberdeen,W.)
Henry, Charles S.
Herbert, T. Arnold (Wycombe)
Higham, John Sharp
Hobart, Sir Robert
Hodge, John
Holland, Sir William Henry
Holt, Richard Durning
Hope,W.Bateman (Somerset,N
Horniman, Emslie John
Horridge, Thomas Gardner
Howard, Hon. Geoffrey
Hudson, Walter
Hutton, Alfred Eddison
Illingworth, Percy H.
Jacoby, Sir James Alfred
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Johnson, W. (Nuneaton)
Jowett, F. W.
Joyce, Michael
Kavanagh, Walter M.
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kelley, George D.
Kilbride, Denis
King, Alfred John (Knutsford)
Laidlaw, Robert
Lambert, George
Lamont, Norman
Lehmann, R. C.
Levy, Sir Maurice
Lloyd-George, Rt. Hon. David
Lough, Thomas
Lyell, Charles Henry
Mackarness, Frederic C.
Maclean, Donald
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
Macpherson, J. T.
MacVeagh, Jeremiah (Down, S.
MacVeigh, Charles(Donegal,E.)
M'Callum, John M.
M'Crae, George

M'Kenna, Rt. Hon. Reginald
M'Killop, W.
M'Laren, Sir C. B. (Leicester)
M'Laren, H. D. (Stafford, W.)
M'Micking, Major G.
Maddison, Frederick
Mallet, Charles E.
Markham, Arthur Basil
Mason, A. E. W. (Coventry)
Massie, J.
Meagher, Michael
Meehan,Francis E.(Leitrim,N.)
Meehan, Patrick A.(Queen's Co.
Micklem, Nathaniel
Montagu, E. S.
Mooney, J. J.
Morgan, G. Hay (Cornwall)
Morrell, Philip
Morse, L. L.
Muldoon, John
Murnaghan, George
Murphy, N. J. (Kilkenny, S.)
Myer, Horatio
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Napier, T. B.
Nicholls, George
Nicholson,Charles N.(Doncast'r
Nolan, Joseph
Norman, Sir Henry
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien,Kendal(Tipperary Mid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Doherty, Philip
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Grady, J.
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Kelly,James(Roscommon,N.
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
O'Shee, James John
Partington, Oswald
Pearce, Robert (Staffs, Leek)
Pearson,W.H.M. (Suffolk, Eye)
Philipps, Col.Ivor(S'thampton)
Philipps, Owen C. (Pembroke)
Pickersgill, Edward Hare
Price, C. E.(Edinb'gh, Central)
Price, RobertJohn(Norfolk,E.)
Priestley, W.E.B.(Bradford,E.
Pullar, Sir Robert
Radford, G. H.
Rawlinson,JohnFrederickPeel
Rea, Russell (Gloucester)
Rea, Walter Russell (Scarboro'
Rees, J. D.
Rendall, Athelstan
Richards, Thomas(W.Monm'th
Richards,T. F.(Wolverh'mpt'n
Richardson, A.
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roberts, Charles H. (Lincoln)
Roberts, G. H. (Norwich)
Robertson, J. M. (Tyneside)
Robinson, S.
Robson, Sir William Snowdon
Roche, Augustine (Cork)
Roche, John (Galway, East)
Roe, Sir Thomas
Rowlands, J.

Runciman, Walter
Russell, T. W.
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Scott, A.H.(Ashton under Lyne
Sears, J. E.
Seaverns, J. H.
Seddon, J.
Seely, Colonel
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Shaw, Rt. Hon. T. (Hawick B.)
Sheehy, David
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Silcock, Thomas Ball
Smeaton, Donald Mackenzie
Smyth, Thomas F. (Leitrim, S.)
Spicer, Sir Albert
Stanger, H. Y.
Stanley, Hn. A.Lyulph(Chesh.)
Stewart, Halley (Greenock)
Strachey, Sir Edward
Straus, B. S. (Mile End)
Summerbell, T.
Taylor, John W. (Durham)
Tennant, Sir Edward(Salisbury
Tennant, H. J. (Berwickshire)
Thomas, David Alfred(Merthyr
Thomasson, Franklin
Thompson, J.W.H. (Somerset, E
Tillett, Louis John
Tomkinson, James
Torrance, Sir A. M.
Toulmin, George
Wadsworth, J.
Walsh, Stephen
Ward, W. Dudley(Southampt'n
Wardle, George J.
Waring, Walter
Wason, Rt. Hn. E (Clackmannan
Wason, John Cathcart(Orkney)
Watt, Henry A.
Wedgwood, Josiah C.
Whitbread, Howard
White, Sir George (Norfolk)
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whitehead, Rowland
Whitley, John Henry (Halifax)
Whittaker, Sir Thomas Palmer
Wiles, Thomas
Williamson, A.
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid)
Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh. N.)
Wilson, P. W. (St. Pancras, S.)
Wilson, W. T. (Westhoughton)
Winfrey, R.
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Whiteley and Mr. Herbert Lewis.

NOES.

Acland-Hood, Rt Hn. Sir Alex. F
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Ashley, W. W.
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt. Hn. Sir H
Balcarres, Lord
Baldwin, Stanley
Barrie, H. T. (Londonderry, N.)
Beach, Hn. Michael Hugh Hicks
Beckett, Hon. Gervase
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bridgeman, W. Clive
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord John P. Joicey-
Cecil, Lord R. (Marylebone, E.
Clive, Percy Archer
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Collings, Rt. Hn. J. (Birmingh'm
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Courthope, G. Loyd
Craig, Charles Curtis(Antrim, S.
Craig, Capt. James (Down, E.)
Craik, Sir Henry
Dixon-Hartland, Sir Fred Dixon
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Fell, Arthur
Fetherstonhaugh, Godfrey
Forster, Henry William
Gibbs, G. A. (Bristol, West)
Guinness, Walter Edward
Hamilton, Marquess of
Hardy, Laurence(Kent, Ashford
Hay, Hon Claude George
Helmsley, Viscount
Hill, Sir Clement
Houston, Robert Paterson
Hunt, Rowland
Lane-Fox, G. R.
Lockwood, Rt. Hn. Lt.-Col. A. R.
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
MacCaw, William J. MacGeagh
Magnus, Sir Philip
Moore, William
Morpeth, Viscount
Nicholson, Wm. G. (Petersfield
Nield, Herbert
Randles, Sir John Scurrah
Roberts, S. (Sheffield, Ecclesall)
Ronaldshay, Earl of
Salter, Arthur Clavell
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, East
Smith, F.E. (Liverpool, Walton)
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Thomson, W. Mitchell- (Lanark)
Thornton, Percy M.
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Valentia, Viscount
Walker, Col. W. H. (Lancashire)
Williams, Col. R. (Dorset, W.)
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E.R.)
Winterton, Earl
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
Younger, George

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir Frederick Banbury and Mr. George D. Faber.

Bill reported, without Amendment; to be read the third time to-morrow.

COSTS IN CRIMINAL CASES BILL.

Order for Second Reading read.

THE SOLICITOR-GENERAL (Sir SAMUEL EVANS, Glamorganshire, Mid.) in moving the Second Reading said that he thought it would be convenient to hon. Members if he explained the general purport of the Bill. There was no contest about it he was glad to say, and therefore he could compress his observations within a very small compass. The object of the Bill was to consolidate the present law, which was in a very chaotic state and dealt with costs in criminal cases, of trials upon indictment at Assizes, and at Quarter Sessions, and the preliminary inquiries in regard to indictable offences before justices. Of course, it did not touch costs in civil cases and matters arising before justices in a Court of summary jurisdiction where they could deal with the matter finally. The provisions with regard to the payment of these costs out of public or local funds depended entirely upon Acts of Parliament, and the Statutes were very numerous and very complicated. For a long time past it had been a puzzle to Judges and all those who dealt with the law to find out whether in particular cases of felony or misdemeanour the costs of the prosecution or defence should be paid at all. A Departmental Committee was appointed in the year 1902, by the late Lord Ritchie, when Home Secretary. That Committee reported in 1903, and the Bill which he now introduced, and which he asked the House to read a second time, was based upon the unanimous recommendations of that Committee. They did not agree upon all points referred to them, but they did agree upon the points embodied in this Bill. He could not go in detail into the various provisions of the Bill except by occupying some considerable time, for he could not explain in a short time all the complicated questions which arose in a case of this nature. It was obvious that if the law could be consolidated, and if the few Amendments required could be made, it would be for the public convenience. Having said so much with regard to the general scope and character of the Bill, he hoped the House would agree to give it a Second Reading so that it might be referred to a Committee. It was essentially a Committee Bill, and there the sections could be considered by those who could bring their practical knowledge to bear on the subject. He begged to move.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*The Solicitor-General.*)

MR. RAWLINSON thought it would be desirable that they should have some more detail of the amendments which were to be made in the law by this Bill. It would be better if some one could tell them what the more important Amendments were. If that were done they would be able to form an opinion as to whether or not they should resist them.

SIR SAMUEL EVANS said he could not speak again without the leave of the House, but perhaps he might be permitted to say that a Memorandum had been prepared showing exactly the alterations proposed in various parts of the Bill. It was a very complicated matter, and he would be prepared to give a copy of the Memorandum to anyone interested so that he could see what the amendments were.

MR. RAWLINSON asked whether they might not have the information now. If the Memorandum were before them it would be a great convenience to the House. If they assented to the Second Reading they would have no means of knowing what the important amendments were as they would be dealt with in a Committee upstairs.

*MR. GEORGE FABER thought the House was not being quite fairly treated. The only Memorandum he had seen was that which he now had before him. Now the hon. Gentleman told the House there was another Memorandum which had not been circulated. The Bill was far more than a mere Consolidation Bill, and the House was entitled before it consented to its Second Reading to more information and more guidance from the hon. Gentleman. He protested strenuously against the way in which they were being treated.

VISCOUNT HELMSLEY pointed out that when Bills were brought in which were partly Consolidation Bills and partly new legislation it was very difficult for a private Member to find out what was merely consolidation of old matter and what was new matter. The suggestion which under these circumstances he would like to offer to the Government was that when they introduced such Bills the new matter included in them should be in print differing from that which dealt with the consolidation matter. That would at once enable private Members to see what was new and what was already the law.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed to a Standing Committee.

CHILDREN BILL.

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [24th March], "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Question again proposed.

*MR. GUINNESS (Bury St. Edmunds) said that when this matter was discussed last week hon. Members on the Unionist side were criticised for the manner in which they dealt with the details rather than the principles of the Bill. But it was essentially a Bill of details. It gathered up and consolidated all the laws relating to children, and therefore it was essential that on the Second Reading the opportunity should be taken to discuss details and suggest Amendments, so that the Government might have an opportunity of considering them before the Committee stage. So far as the general principles were concerned, no one on either side of the House would be found to quarrel with the Bill. They all admitted that the State must step in and save the children of neglectful, ignorant, and criminal parents, but as all those who were not Socialists recognised that the State was a very blundering substitute for a parent they desired that its functions should be kept in as narrow a channel as possible. He was sorry to see that the Under-Secretary for the Home Department was going to make registration compulsory for single child homes even where periodical payments were made. The opinion of those Members of the London County Council who were in touch with the question of infant-life protection was that a great deal of harm would be done if foster-parents who adopted only one child for periodical payments were included in the operation of the Bill. If the payment was one lump sum it was certainly desirable that there should be inspection, because there the foster-parents had a great and direct advantage in the case of the early death of the child. Where, however, periodical payments were made the parents were in touch with the foster-parents, and it was very often the case that the child was adopted from motives of affection. The Under-Secretary had stated that local authorities would be allowed to make exceptions, but even so the necessity of notification would deter many of those most suitable from adopting a child, and charitable societies who were trying to reclaim unfortunate women who had had the misfortune to have an illegitimate child would be very much hampered. He hoped the proposed Amendment would be re-considered by the hon. Gentleman. Another suggestion he desired to make was that the local authority should be enabled to veto the taking of more than one child into a home, and to prevent the transference of a child from one home to another. Under the Bill the nurses would have to notify the local authority within forty-eight hours before taking another child, but that was not sufficient. Many cases occurred where women without the means to keep them took three or four children for a lump sum, with the result that when the money was exhausted the children were thrown on the rates. That part of the Bill should be greatly strengthened so as to insure that the local authority would be able to inspect the home before the money was paid and the child taken, and to ascertain that the woman who proposed to take the child had sufficient means to keep it after the payment was exhausted. The next Clause to which he wished to refer was Clause 9, a financial clause. Under that clause the City of London was to be exempted from contributing to the cost incurred by the county of London in connection with infant life protection. Under the Act of 1897, this charge had been thrown into the general county rate, and the City had thus borne its share. If, however, the City was now only to spend money in enforcing the Act within its own boundary, it would avoid contributing to this very necessary work, as, of course, there were few or no such homes in that area. Owing to the large number of women employed in the City who lived in the surrounding districts, the City was partly responsible for this work and ought to make some contribution. The next matter to which he desired to draw attention was the provisions for committing children to industrial and reformatory schools. This matter unfortunately came rather suddenly on the London County Council. The Home Office intimated their intention of bringing in this Bill and asked for suggestions just as the London County Council were going into recess, and it was impossible for that body to transmit their views. But as the London County Council dealt with far more children in the industrial schools than any other body in the country, he might mention one or two points where the Bill required Amendment. The first arose on the clause which allowed children of between twelve and fourteen years of age to be sent to an industrial school for various reasons, but gave no power to commit children between those ages who had been guilty of theft or any offence punishable with imprisonment. It was desirable that such children should not be sent to a reformatory school until after they had reached the age of fourteen. Children did not become hardened criminals until after they reached that age, and it was not advisable that these young children should be sent to reformatory schools which contained youths of nineteen years of age, who might contaminate them. What they wished was that the magistrates should be allowed to send children to industrial schools up to the age of fourteen. It was also provided that where an order had been made in respect of a youthful offender of the age of fourteen years and upwards and no reformatory school would receive him, the Court could commute the order and send the offender to prison. That was not at all a desirable thing, and the power should be limited to children whose characters were known to be so bad that it was undesirable to send them to a reformatory school. The provisions stating that the conditions rendering the child liable to be sent to an industrial school were much the same as the provisions of the present law, but the present law in that regard needed strengthening At the present time it was largely a matter of chance as to whether a child was sent to an industrial or a reformatory school. It very often happened that magistrates refused to send a child to an industrial school, because they did not want to relieve the parents of the expense of supporting it. He could give many flagrant cases of that kind, and he would quote three of them. The first was that of a man who was guilty of flogging his two boys at intervals of half-an-hour for cutting a piece of Christmas pudding, and he had also been condemned twelve months before for a criminal assault on his daughter. Although he was certainly not a fit guardian, the magistrate refused to adopt the suggestion of the London County Council, and to commit the boys to an industrial school. In the case of a little child of four years and ten months the father did not work but lived by his wife's prostitution, and both parents were charged with being drunk and disorderly. The County Council proposed to send the boy to the Home for Little Boys. Again, a discharge was granted by a different magistrate. Another case was that of a child of seven years. The mother had recently served six months imprisonment, and the father was fined for assault; the child was in a verminous condition. In this third case, also, the magistrate refused to take action under the Industrial Schools Act. It was obvious what the magistrates had in their minds. They did not want to encourage parents to let their children fall into vicious ways in order that they might be sent in an industrial school; but he thought the State should strengthen the law and encourage the magistrates to send children to industrial schools, because he did not think it was fair to punish the parents at the expense of the children. It was very necessary where there was no proper home for the child, and where it was perfectly certain that, unless he was committed to an industrial school, he would be brought up as a criminal, that the magistrates should be encouraged to send him to such an institution. It seemed to him that it was possible to prevent a large number of these industrial school cases by bringing home to the parents the fact that if their children were sent to industrial schools they would lose all control over them. It was very often asserted that many parents got their children sent to industrial schools in order to be freed from responsibility of keeping them. On some occasions, when he attended the responsible committee of the London education authority, he was startled to find cases in which whole families of children had been sent to the industrial schools. He believed that parents realised that in those schools their children got remarkably good education, the standard of the Home Office being far higher than that of the Board of Education. If they looked through the reports of industrial schools they would find that in after life the children who had attended them did extremely well. He noticed that one had become headmaster in the shorthand department of a large college; another had become a Bachelor of Science and manager of large Government works abroad. Many sergeants in the Army and superintendents of police and even justices of the peace and chairmen of boards of guardians had been educated in these schools. No doubt parents realised all this, and were, therefore, content to allow their children to become liable to be sent to them. A great many of these parents had a certain amount of affection for their children, but had no sense of responsibility. He urged that their sense of responsibility could be stimulated by working upon their affections, and by pointing out to them that under this Act, and under the existing law, when once a child was committed to an industrial school they lost all control over him. At present they did not realise that. A great many of them imagined that if a child was sent to an industrial school they still had control, and could say what his avocation was to be. What he proposed was that during the time these children were in the Remand Homes, to enable the local authority to make inquiry into their cases and forward suggestions t othe magistrates, the magistrates should, under the law, be compelled to notify to the parents that if a child was sent to an industrial school they lost all control over him, and the boy could be apprenticed or sent abroad without the parents being consulted in the least. He believed that by such means a large number of parents would be induced to look after their children and prevent them from being sent to industrial schools. By Clause 64 it was proposed that the limit for supervision should be nineteen years, but it was felt that this was not long enough, and that a boy should be kept under supervision until he had reached twenty-one years of age. Before that age, there was a considerable prospect of his slipping back into his old ways, and getting into touch with his criminal companions from whom they were trying to reclaim him. He hoped the Home Office would be able to modify that provision. It would cost nothing, or practically nothing, and would cause no inconvenience to the child. As to the question of the expenses of certified schools, he would appeal to the hon. Gentleman to try and do something to lighten the burden thrown on the local authorities. The very heavy cost of the administration of the existing law had deterred local authorities from doing their duty, the fact being that the cost of these schools was steadily increasing, while the Government contribution was fixed twenty years ago. Formerly the local authorities had only to pay 34 per cent. of the cost of the schools, whereas today they had to pay 42 per cent. That was no doubt the reason why more children had not been sent to the industrial schools of the country. He would suggest that the whole cost of sending the children of vagrants to industrial schools should be borne by the Exchequer. It was not fair to throw it on the local authority, in whose district the children were committed. The plan he suggested was the only fair way of dealing with it, and the only way that would encourage the local authority to see that the law was put into operation. As to the question of the expenses of certified schools, he would also urge that the local authorities should be compelled to make arrangements to send children to reformatory schools. He thought the hon. Gentleman agreed to that in the case of industrial schools, but he did not think he had done so with regard to reformatory schools. He did not believe that it would necessitate the building of any fresh schools; there was plenty of accommodation; it would only mean that the local authority would have to make arrangements with the managers of existing schools. On the question of day industrial schools it would be a very great assistance if the Home Department could see their way to adopting a suggestion in the Report of the Inter-Departmental Committee appointed in 1905 to inquire into the system of funds for industrial and reformatory schools. The Committee recommended in 1905 that the Government contribution in the case of day industrial schools should be raised from 6d. and 1s., in voluntary and compulsory cases respectively, to 1s. and 2s. He believed that if they did that they would very much encourage the creation of day industrial schools, which were most useful to the children of those parents who were not sufficiently delinquent or neglectful to justify the magistrates in committing the children to certified industrial schools. The London County Council, and, he believed, several other local authorities, were taking a large number of voluntary cases. The Government Inspector had stated in 1905 that it might be that there was a slight tendency to a decline in the numbers admitted into the day industrial schools, and that it was due to the matter of expense. There was no doubt whatever that the day industrial schools were most valuable in preventing children who had no supervision, their mothers being out on day work, from getting into criminal surroundings and eventually becoming a charge on the rates. Another point he would like to urge was that no child should be sent to prison under sixteen years of age. Under Clause 99 it was proposed that a young person could be sentenced to imprisonment, but he thought that the value of the Bill would be very much increased if prison was confined to those who were over sixteen. He recognised the great value of the provision which would enable constables to arrest the children of vagrant parents and have them committed to industrial schools, but he did not think, unless the clause was strengthened, that it would be of very much use; he was afraid that it would be a dead-letter; and he would suggest that it should be made the duty of the officers in charge of casual wards to notify the police of any cases coming to their notice of children of criminal or vagrant parents who were liable under this provision to be sent to industrial schools. If they left it in the hands of the constables and made it optional, he was afraid that the provision would not be as valuable as it might otherwise be. Of course, his suggestions might be criticised on the ground that they would add to the cost of the Bill, but he believed that it would be money well spent, Of course it cost less to let children run about the streets and become criminals than to send them for a few years to these schools where they would be taught a trade. No doubt it was for the moment cheaper to send them to prison for a month, than to send them to industrial schools for three years; but in the long run it was very much dearer. He thought it was quite justifiable to increase the number of children sent to these schools under the action of the law, and by that means to decrease the number in after life who would have to be supported either in our casual wards or in our gaols. He hoped the hon. Gentleman would be able to embody some of these suggestions in the Bill, for he believed they would increase its efficiency in stopping the sources of physical deterioration, poverty, and crime.

*MR. GULLAND (Dumfries Burghs) said he would like to join with others in congratulating the hon. Gentleman on the way in which this Bill had been introduced, and especially on his having listened to societies and others interested in the question and given effect to their proposals. It seemed to him that the great beauty of this Bill was that it was framed from the point of view of the children. Many children were in a vicious circle of environment, and this Bill broke that and replaced it by a virtuous circle; indeed, the Bill was a perfect hospital of life-saving appliances. He would like to take up a few points relating especially to Scotland. The first was with regard to the reformatory and industrial schools. There were in Scotland a great many difficulties in connection with the management and the finances of those schools. The difficulty in Scotland was that those schools were neither fish, flesh, nor good red herring. They were neither State, municipal, nor private. They were a little of each, and the result was that they were extremely difficult to work. He had rejoiced the other day to hear the Under-Secretary say that he would make it mandatory for local authorities to provide industrial school accommodation just as they had at present to provide elementary school accommodation, and that he would make it compulsory for local authorities to contribute to the maintenance of the children. He did not think there was much controversy as to the advisability of the local authority doing those things, and he sincerely hoped the hon. Gentleman would be able to carry out that proposal. The question of the management of those schools remained. That perhaps scarcely came under the purview of the Bill, but it would be wise to transfer the industrial schools, at any rate, to the school boards, so that they would be under somebody's definite control. At present school boards had power to establish industrial schools or to purchase existing ones, but it was not compulsory for them to do so. He knew that that was a big question, but he trusted the Secretary for Scotland would tackle it and settle it in a way which would be thorough and satisfactory. A point that occurred to him in connection with the Bill was the very beneficent nature of the relation of the Acts of the present Government dealing with social reform. For instance, the provisions in the present Bill in connection with the Infant Life Protection Act seemed to work in very well with the provisions of the Notification of Births Acts of last year. He was very glad the hon. Gentleman had said he would accept the Report of the Select Committee and include the inspection of one-child homes. The Report was unanimous, and while due weight was given to the consideration which had been put forward by the hon. Member who had just spoken, all the members of the Committee were unanimous that the one-child home should be included, and he thought when Members read the Report they would agree that it was on the right lines. One thing that struck him very forcibly was that it might be a wise thing to transfer the charge of this matter from boards of guardians and parish councils in Scotland to town councils and county councils. That was the case in the Act of 1872, and he suggested that with all the greater emphasis because it seemed to him that in many of the parts of Scotland where the Notification of Births Act had been adopted the town councils were appointing lady health visitors to visit the mothers where the births had been notified. It seemed to him that it would help the working of this Act and make it much more thorough if those same ladies were appointed inspectors under the Infant Life Protection Act. The two things would work in very well together, and that might be done if the town council was the authority. Then on the other side the town-council was much more in touch with the police, whose aid unfortunately had to be brought in, than the parish council, and he hoped the hon. Gentleman would consider in Committee whether the town and county council might not be substituted for the parish council. Then another relation of a previous Act with the present Bill was the Probation of Offenders Act of last year with the new proposals dealing with juvenile crime of this year. The institution of the children's Courts he very heartily approved of. They had these children's Courts in about a dozen places in Scotland. Public opinion was very strongly in favour of them and he thought was ready now for their being made compulsory. In 1906, in Scotland no fewer than 9,765 males and 595 females under sixteen years were proceeded against—altogether over 10,000 young persons. To remove these young people entirely from the ordinary police court would be of immense advantage, and he welcomed very thoroughly the provisions of this Bill. In 1906, in Scotland, seventy-three young persons were sentenced to imprisonment, and in addition 249 were imprisoned in default of payment of fines, so that altogether 322 young persons under sixteen years old were put into prison, and received a criminal taint. He was sure the Bill would prevent that. By cutting off crime at the source they would also diminish adult crime. With regard to juvenile smoking that was a new offence, and he for one only agreed to it because young people found guilty of it would not be brought before an ordinary police court or subjected to imprisonment. He thought the other parts of the Bill made the prohibition of juvenile smoking not only possible but very feasible. He agreed that it would not immediately abolish juvenile smoking, but it would set up a standard, and it would enlist much more powerfully than at present voluntary efforts of both parents and teachers to prevent the evil which all authorities had told them did great harm to young people. He thanked the hon. Gentleman for the clause allowing parish councils in Scotland to subscribe to the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, because much of the work of the Bill would have to be done by such societies, and indeed had better be done by them, and therefore it was only right that power should be given to subscribe to them. There was one point alluded to by the Under-Secretary in his speech that he had not included in the Bill—the provisions to exclude children from public-houses in Scotland. He said that that was in the Licensing Bill, but the Licensing Bill only applied to England, and therefore there seemed to be a possibility of England receiving this advantage before Scotland. He hoped the Secretary for Scotland and the Lord Advocate would introduce some measure to exclude children from public-houses in Scotland also, or at least to give facilities to a little Bill which he had introduced upon the subject. One point of great interest was that all questions with regard to children were brought together in the Bill. That was good. But then again after the Bill was passed the interests of the children were dispersed, and duties were put upon different Government Departments to carry out the separate provisions of the Bill. He would very strongly suggest to the hon. Gentleman the desirability of somehow or other—he did not know how it was to be done—putting all the interests of the children under one Department, or, if that was not possible, of having a Consultative Committee of the different Departments, Education, Local Government and Home Office, to sit periodically and keep a constant eye upon the interests of the children. Even under this Bill they had the local duties with regard to children divided—he was speaking of Scotland—amongst school boards, town councils, and parish councils, and those three bodies were working separately and without much reference to one another. He knew that in some cases there were little joint committees working together, but he would like to see such a provision embodied in the Bill. He would like to have at headquarters and in each locality a definite organisation watching and working consistently and persistently to save the children. Another advantage of the Bill was that not only would it help the children but it would help those who were trying to help the children. They could not do everything by legislation. In this matter he thought they could do a great deal by setting a standard and an example, and there were a large number of voluntary workers all over the country who were at present devoting themselves to the interests of the children. He could assure the hon. Gentleman that even by the introduction of the Bill he had done a great deal to give a new encouragement and a new stimulus to these good people to put forth new efforts for the rescue and the improvement of children.

*MR. COCHRANE (Ayrshire, N.) said that from the course of the debate it must be apparent to the House that this was no party question. Where the children were concerned, inside and outside the House everyone was anxious to do what he could in their interests. They might differ sometimes as to the exact way in which their desires should be carried out, but he was sure those desires were genuinely held. If they could tap the evil at its source—if they took care of the pennies, the pounds would take care of themselves—and if they could look after the children while they were young and see as far as they could that they were safeguarded, when they were grown up they would not fall upon the poor rate or go to prison. The Bill had undoubtedly a great deal to recommend it, although in some points he should desire to be allowed to offer criticism. It was a consolidation Bill of considerable length, and he thanked the hon. Gentleman in charge of it for issuing a statement pointing out where there were changes in the law and where there was mere consolidation. The Bill dealt with so many questions that it became almost a Committee discussion, but that could not be avoided. The question of infant life protection had been raised. The evils of baby farming were familiar to everybody. Terrible outrages had been committed, and anything they could do properly to inspect homes to which small children were consigned was desirable. But tact and discretion must be exercised in inspecting homes. Questions of a religious character might come up which were extremely difficult to deal with, and again there might be legitimate cases where children had been *bona fide* consigned by well-to-do persons to homes while they were obliged to be absent abroad. As far as he could see, under the Bill it would be absolutely necessary in each of those cases that some inspection should take place. He was sure the hon. Member would consider that that would be supererogation. It would be ridiculous that the Bill should apply to *bona fide* cases of that kind, and he hoped some means would be devised by which they might be excepted. There was a good deal to be said in favour of places of detention for juvenile offenders, but there would be considerable difficulty in setting them up, and he wished the Bill was a little more explicit as to how they were to be set up and paid for. No doubt anything was better than sending these little children to prison, but still there was room for discussion as to the class of house of detention that was to be set up. Then again, the hon. Member had suggested that in London there should be four Courthouses to form a part of the houses of detention. Surely that would not cover the ground very thoroughly. Children's cases were very fairly dealt with by the London magistrates, who were extremely humane and kindly in their manner towards the children. The Home Secretary had made arrangements with the London magistrates, by which the cases of children were not taken in Court during the ordinary business, but in the magistrates' room, and he thought the hon. Member would find it difficult to devise a better scheme. What was suggested seemed to him to be very elaborate machinery for so few cases. He noticed that imprisonment of children under twelve was to be abolished, but one case in which imprisonment under that age would be necessary had already been pointed out by his hon. friend. Where a child had been committed to an industrial school or reformatory, and the local authority refused to pay, that child might be committed to prison. It was hard upon that child that the local authorities who refused to pay should be able to ride off with the result that the child was sent to prison. He admitted that his own country had failed in some respects to do her duty in this matter. The hon. Member for Dumfries had alluded incidentally to the subject, and had pointed out that there had been a failure in certain cities in Scotland to pay the necessary sums for children committed to reformatory and industrial schools, and that deserved the attention of the hon. Member in the conduct of the Bill. He was glad that children under sixteen were not to be committed to penal servitude. The evil effects of sending children to prison were set forth in every Report of the Prison Commission; those Reports showed how imprisonment made the children callous, hardened, and inured to prison life, and how they lost their self-respect. Those children in prison had a comparatively easy life with their food and clothes found them. Their lives were regulated with no initiative of their own, and no reward for energy, and when they were liberated from that hothouse climate they fell an easy prey to anybody who suggested to them that there was an easier way of living than being honest. As regarded reformatory and industrial schools he noted that some suggestions made by a Committee over which he had the honour to preside had been adopted, and he was glad to see that the House was taking such an interest in the question of reformatory and industrial schools. He knew from experience that it was very hard to get people to understand that kind of work. He had talked on the subject to hon. Members and they seemed to think that reformatory schools were a sort of place of torture for little boys, but nothing could be more absurd, because those boys were given a better education in some respects than was given in the board schools, because it was of a practical kind. The boys in reformatory schools were taught not only book-learning, but such matters as the growth of timber, after which they were put into the carpenter's shop. Other boys were taught the properties of leather, and were afterwards put to making boots and shoes, and when those boys went out into the world in after life they were often better equipped to earn their living in industrial occupations than boys educated in the board schools only. They were also given liberty and freedom, and their self-respect was encouraged in every possible manner, in fact the career of those boys was more like public school life than board school life. They were taken out to camps every year, and they could run away if they chose, but scarcely one had been known to abuse his privileges. The result was shown in the Report of the Inspector of Reformatories, who pointed out that from 85 to 90 per cent. of the cases of boys sent to reformatories turned out a complete cure and the boys became good citizens. One inspector told him that when he went off to Canada to visit some of the children sent out there, he was met by a carriage and pair driven by a distinguished official who said that he had been educated in a reformatory school in this country. He was glad that the hon. Member proposed to encourage emigration in order to give these boys a new home and a fresh chance in life. Many local authorities rather hesitated to spend £12 a head to send a boy to Canada, but hitherto from 100 to 150 boys per annum had been sent in that way. He was glad to notice that the hon. Member took power to apply to the Treasury for a further sum to be spent in that direction. When a boy left a reformatory school he was very frequently returned to his parents and began life under his former surroundings with the result that he often lapsed again into crime. That evil would be remedied if the boys were emigrated. He would like to call the attention of the House to some of the clauses which he thought were less commendable than those to which he had referred. One of them was Clause 13, which dealt with cases of accidental burning. He hardly thought the hon. Member knew the full effect of that clause. It was not to be a criminal act to have a fire in one's room without a fireguard, but if an accident took place and a child got burned by going to the fire, then the fact that the parent had not a fireguard became a criminal act and the unfortunate parent was to be hailed before the Court. What would happen in the case of children called down in the drawing-room or the parlour for the children's hour? If an accident took place would the parent be hailed before the magistrate? He ventured to say that there were no statistics of any wilful or negligent burning of children in the country. In the case of burning because the fire was not guarded, was the grief of the whole family to be accentuated by the parent being brought before the magistrate and fined? If they were going to make it a crime if a child met with an accident from an unguarded fire why not make it also a crime if an accident occurred from a lamp? A child would be far more likely to pull a lamp over. Why not make it a crime if a child was injured crossing the road in the middle of the traffic? He asked the hon. Member to consider that point in proposing such restrictions, for in that respect he did not think he was acting either wisely or well. Then again he would like to know what overlying was. Did he suggest that the mothers of this country deliberately lay over their children with a view to suffocating them? He thought that was a monstrous allegation and a statement which could not be proved. The late Home Secretary read out to the House during the course of his speech the experience of a coroner who said that in his district of London they had been engaged for some years in endeavouring to find genuine cases of overlying, but so far their search had been unfruitful. Overlying was a generic term probably used by medical officers to cover many cases where children were found dead in bed and a diagnosis proved somewhat difficult. He did not believe there was such a thing as wilful overlying of children. Hon. Members might call it grandmotherly legislation, but it would be a great reflection even upon a grandmother who suggested that any woman would wilfully overlie her child. If overlying was really an offence then a £10 fine was totally inadequate to meet the case. With regard to juvenile smoking he did not think that that was an offence of a very flagrant character. Little boys always had smoked and always would smoke, and it should not be overlooked that smoking in early years brought its own penalties with it. The hon. Member desired to check that habit and in doing so sheltered himself behind the Report of the House of Lords Committee. He did not believe that a House of Lords Committee was infallible, or that its recommendations should be slavishly followed. Their recommendation was that where a boy was seen smoking, or in the opinion of a constable was about to smoke, he should be dealt with. A boy might be sent a message to a tobacconist's shop by his father, and on coming out of the shop he might be seen, pursued, and captured by a constable who desired to make the capture when he ought to be attending to more serious matters. The officer was to take the boy to a place of detention. The magistrate, as was explained by the Under-Secretary, would only go to the places of detention every other day, and the boy might have to spend a night in the house of detention. Under the Bill whenever a charge was brought against a boy the parent or guardian must attend the Court. The father would lose a day's wages in going to the place to prove that the boy was sent out by him to buy tobacco or cigarettes. What remedy would there be for the boy or the parent under those circumstances? Was it not a straining of the law to subject people to such treatment? Little boys still would smoke; they had only to go to their own gardens, or do as possibly the hon. Gentleman opposite had himself done—smoke up the chimney. The best way to deal with this matter would be to stop the practice at the fountain, and make it illegal to sell to little boys of a certain age. To have a little boy brought before a magistrate and to cause the parent to lose a day's wages was going a great deal too far. The object, no doubt, was to prevent the parent from evading the responsibility which ought to fall upon him. It was thought that if the boy's father lost a day's wages he would take the punishment of the boy into his own hands. Was that fair? If it was thought that the boy should be punished otherwise than by fine, if it was thought that punishment with a strap or a cane was sufficient for a boy who smoked, why not put it in the Bill and let the punishment be administered under proper judicial authority? If the parent had lost a day's wages, how would he treat the boy when he got him home? The punishment would be measured not by the fact that the little boy had smoked, but by the fact that the father had lost a day's wages. The punishment might be administered when the parent was in a fit of temper, and it would, therefore, be better to put in the Bill that the boy might receive three or four strokes with a cane. He approved of many of the provisions of the Bill, but the clauses to which he had referred did not add to its strength, and if they were persisted in they would probably add to the difficulty of passing the measure.

*MR. MACLEAN (Bath) said the hon. Member for North Ayrshire had asked for figures showing the basis for the clauses with regard to accidents from burning and overlying. During the last seven years the number of cases of burning was 10,500, and the number of cases of overlying was 9,500. He submitted that was a huge national loss which the State must deal with, while having due regard to the feelings of parents which the hon. Member opposite had so well expressed. A case came to his notice two months ago in which a mother of drunken habits allowed two or three young children to play about in a house, with the result that some of them having gone too near the fire an accident occurred. The mother had placed herself in such a condition that she was unable to safeguard the children. She was prosecuted, but a conviction was not obtained. If the provisions of this Bill had been in force, she would have been properly punished. There was an enormous body of public opinion in favour of the suggested change in the law. Last year there were hundreds of meetings held all over England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland, and the officials of the Government were in possession of piles of resolutions in regard to the matter. The Society of Coroners had considered the matter and given their adhesion to a much more drastic amendment of the law than was proposed by the Bill. If the hon. Member for North Ayrshire considered these facts he would perhaps take a different view of the clauses when the Bill went into Committee. As to the prevention of cruelty to children, excellent results had come from the action of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children. Fifteen years cases of brutal ill-treatment of children found about 45 per cent. of the total cases dealt with by the society, and last year they had dropped down to 8 per cent. The influence of public opinion was useful in preventing that form of offence. An extraordinary amount of public opinion on the part of all classes of society had been expressed in favour of the clauses dealing with juvenile smoking. He remembered reading a little while ago of the enormous amount of cigarettes consumed in Sheffield. That account stated that no less than 30,000,000 were smoked by young smokers in that city. The hon. Member opposite had said that that evil should be dealt with at the source. It was proposed by Clause 37 to make it an offence for any person to sell or give "to a person apparently under the age of sixteen years any cigarettes or cigarette papers, whether for his own use or not." He welcomed the provisions in the first portion of the Bill in regard to infant life protection. As to the proposals for the extension of the reformatory school system, he admitted that they were desirable, but at the same time he was old-fashioned enough to be very chary indeed of destroying parental responsibility for the child. The aim of the State should not be so much to take the child from the home as to take cruelty from the home. He believed they could, by insisting on the responsibility of the parent, do an enormous amount of good. He would beg the House not to entertain the idea that parents were to be relieved of their responsibility and allowed to dump their children into industrial schools. Parents must be educated as to their responsibilities. There was one point which had not been touched upon with regard to Children's Courts. There were many young rascals in the streets who seemed to like the notoriety derived from being placed in the dock. He thought a great deal of the incentive to wrong-doing would be taken away if these young persons who appeared in the public Courts were quietly dealt with in a private room by magistrates who knew all about them. A new era was opening up for the protection of these drift species of young humanity. These things had been dealt with effectually in America, even in Egypt, and certainly in Australia, and thousands of young people had been rescued from an undesirable life and surroundings. From his own personal experience, he wished to join in the commendations which had been given to the Under-Secretary for the Home Office. The hon. Gentleman had seen everybody who could give him information on the subject-matter of the Bill, and it was owing to his ingenuity and skill, and the time he had devoted to it, that they found the measure in its present shape. He hoped he would be pardoned for a reference to the Rev. Benjamin Waugh, who was well known to all Members of the House for his tremendous earnestness in favour of Bills such as this. He deeply regretted that that great philanthropist had not lived to see the passage of this Bill into law; he had gone from them, but he was worthy of an equal place in their memories with Shaftesbury and Barnardo.

MR. SUMMERBELL (Sunderland) said it was not his intention to oppose the Bill in any way. He commended it as consolidating all the various Acts of Parliament applicable to child life, and he recommended his right hon. friend the President of the Local Government Board to adopt a similar policy in regard to Housing Acts. He thought there were two aspects of this question of child life. He agreed with those who asserted that every parent who, through drink or immoral conduct neglected his children, and allowed them to go to waste, should be prosecuted to the utmost extent. But the economic aspect of the question must also be recognised. Let them take the case of a widow left with four or five children, and compelled to go out to do charing work and washing for their support and her own. What was that poor woman to do with the children when she was out earning her living? She could not afford economically to pay for the protection of the children, however much she would like to. Was it then right to punish her if any harm came to them through what he called innocent neglect? In the slums of the City of London, there were 35,000 children who had practically no parental care, and the wonder to him often was that the children were not really worse than they were. Where a child had been lost through accidental burning, it did not always follow that the parent had neglected the interests of the child, and he repudiated the idea of punishing the parent under such circumstances. The loss of the child by fire was itself quite sufficient punishment. If they were to rescue the children for the future service of the State, the House must go a step further and recognise the necessity of putting within the reach of every parent the economic opportunity of looking after the welfare of his or her children. In the larger towns men who would do better if they had the opportunity were compelled to live amid miserable surroundings, and the children had nothing but the pawnshop and public-house as their constant companions, and the gutter as their playground. These men should have an economic opportunity of doing their best for their children, which at present they had not. Reformatory schools had been spoken of very eulogistically. An hon. Member had led them to believe that reformatory schools were better than board schools, and had spoken about an individual who had been brought up in a reformatory school, and was now driving about in a carriage and pair. One would have thought from the hon. Gentleman's remarks that the board schools were inferior to the reformatory schools; but he maintained that so far as the education in the board schools was concerned, the hon. Member's statement was a gross exaggeration. He wished to say that so far as the occupants of the Labour Benches were concerned, they were pleased at the many good features in the Bill, and were prepared to allow it to go to a Committee upstairs, where a few Amendments might be made to make the punishment a little less severe on innocent people who were unable to take every care of their children. He quite agreed with the hon. Gentleman who had spoken of the big national loss involved in the sacrifice of child life to-day. That was an enormous loss to the nation, and they ought to do their best to lessen it. He submitted to the House, however, that the true remedy, if they wanted to rescue the children, was to tap the evil at its source, and to afford to the parents an economic opportunity to bring up their children as they ought to be brought up.

*MR. BRAMSDON (Portsmouth) thought that the action of the Government in introducing this measure was statesmanlike. He commended the clauses which instituted child Courts and did away with imprisonment of the children. He especially thanked his hon. friend the Under-Secretary for having introduced Clauses 13 and 14, which were in substance the same as clauses in the Bill which he had brought in last year to prevent cruelty to children. He had been a coroner for nearly twenty-five years and a deputy coroner for five years in one of the largest towns in the Kingdom, and, from experience obtained in that capacity, he believed that if the Bill became law, the great loss of children through burning and overlying would be reduced by one-half. It was terrible to contemplate the awful punishment which a child was compelled to undergo from burning. It was a mistake to suppose that the children who were overlaid were weaklings. They were generally healthy children who were taken to bed by their mothers sometimes in a drunken condition. His hon. friend the Member for Sunderland had referred to the economic side of the question; but was it an economic question? He supposed it would be said that the parents were unable in the case of child-burning to provide fireguards, but his experience was that that excuse was rarely made. Charitable institutions would arise which would provide fireguards if necessary, but he believed that in the majority of cases when the parents got to know the responsibility which rested upon them they would find means to meet it. From an experience of thirty years he could assure the House that no fear need be felt that innocent parents would be punished. Let the people know that the responsibility rested upon them and they would set to work to think for themselves, as they did not too often do now, and they would take the necessary precautions. He hoped that those two clauses would be passed, and that generally the Bill would be acceptable.

VISCOUNT MORPETH (Birmingham, S.) said he wished to say a word or two about industrial schools, and, differing from his hon. friend below him, he did not compare them with board schools. The children in the board schools were the children of the free, but the children in the industrial schools had been sent there for their own fault or more often for the faults of their parents. Considering the source from which children in industrial schools came they had accomplished some of the most remarkable things that had ever been seen in this country. When they considered that the children were recruited from the moral dregs of the population it was a testimony to their extraordinary success that they turned these children out as reliable men and women. That fact spoke greatly to the credit of these institutions. He fully agreed with the remarks of the hon. Member for Bath as to parental responsibility, and no person in that House could be more anxious to retain it than he was, but there was a class of parent to whom children could not be safely left. The hon. Member below him had quoted two or three cases which were quite enough to show that that was so, and it was unnecessary to amplify them. No Government or country could leave children in the hands of guardians such as those, and it was very difficult to provide for them except by the industrial school methods, which had, as he had said, been extremely successful. Anyone who had seen the sort of boys and girls they turned out, and the affection they had for the places in which they had lived, would understand what the work was which those institutions were doing. It was most important that the children should be sent to them in good time before it was too late to save them, because if they did not go to the industrial school they went later on to the reformatory or the prison. It was objected that the industrial schools were not sufficient in number, and were a burden upon the rates, but he would be glad to support the hon. Gentleman in any measure he might take, in order to supply an adequate number of industrial schools, whether it was by putting an obligation on the local authorities to erect them, or by giving larger grants for children in the schools. In regard to the Report of the Select Committee in reference to single nurse-child homes, he said with some diffidence that he had doubts upon the matter, because he saw in the Report that the Members were unanimous on the question of inspection, and he had not the benefit of being a Member of the Committee which gave illustrations of carelessness, neglect, and cruelty even in single nurse-child homes, which necessitated some inspection. He could not help saying that all these things were a balance of advantage and disadvantage, and if there were some cases of neglect and cruelty in those homes, there were many hundreds of homes where much affection and care was given by the foster-parents to the poor children who were boarded out. Inspection was a necessary evil, and if no harm took place so much the better, but there were many homes in which, if there was to be inspection, the children would not be received so readily or so cordially. He noticed that at the end of the Report it was said that so far as possible the inspection should be deprived of any rigid or formal character, and carried out by women possessing special qualifications for the work. Locally they knew that there were great numbers of women ready to give their time to work of this kind, but very often those women, zealous and keen as they were, had the defects of their qualities. Perhaps the excess of zeal which they put into the accomplishment of their work had an irritating effect upon the foster parents who received the children. The lady full of the expectation of a tidiness which was impossible, or of open windows which were not prevalent in this country, swooped down upon a cottage and made requirements which the foster-parents were unable or unwilling to comply with, and very often the father of the family said that if he was to be exposed to visits of that kind he would rather do without the child. That was the difficulty which presented itself in country districts and it was a great one to overcome. He quite recognised, however, that inspection might be necessary, but he would suggest that when the Bill got into Committee the hon. Gentleman should carefully consider the matter, and see whether it was not possible to put in qualifications which would enable him to exempt certain homes from inspection. He saw that there would be a difficulty in the case. If some homes were to be exempt while others were inspected, it would cast a slur upon those homes which were not considered worthy of exemption, but he hoped that some means would be found to get out of the difficulty. It was a great and real one, and if it was not dealt with incalculable harm would be done in regard to the boarding-out of children. Then as to smoking, he thought everybody agreed that it was bad for young boys, and he was very anxious it should be stopped, but to his mind the proper authorities to stop it were the parent and the schoolmaster. The Bill was brought in to prevent boys from coming into the atmosphere of the police Court or the prison, and yet it went out of its way in regard to a not very serious offence to drag boys into that atmosphere. If the Bill confined itself to forbidding the sale of tobacco to boys, he thought no harm would be done, and he would point out that that would follow the analogy of the Licensing Bill under which children were not to be allowed to go into a public house. The age-limit was sixteen, or such limit as the magistrates might determine, but they must remember that at sixteen a very large number of boys were not under the control of their parents and were not pupils, but were earning their own livelihood and standing on their own feet, and it was difficult to make restrictions on their liberty. He objected to the proposal because it would bring up boys to disregard the law, which was a more serious fault than smoking. They would learn to break the laws of the country and would think that it was a trivial and unimportant thing. The hon. Gentleman had said that the fact that the State had denounced the practice would impress the young, but he was afraid that the young had not so developed that any decrees of the State would impress them in such a matter. He did not wish to repeat what so many had said, but he desired to express how grateful they were to the hon. Gentleman for his excellent Bill.

*Mr. BRIGHT (Oldham) remarked that as a member of the Select Committee he would like to say in regard to the single nurse child homes that they had very ample evidence that there was a necessity for inspection. They had also evidence that there was no difficulty in finding homes for a single nurse child amongst decent people. They had before them the evidence of the lady inspectors. The noble Lord was inclined to imagine that the female inspectors would behave in a harsh manner, but he thought if he had seen the ladies who came before the Committee and heard their evidence he would not have entertained that opinion. They said that in the single nurse child homes which they had inspected, and which they had no difficulty in getting permission to inspect, the presence of the lady inspector was not only not resented but welcomed. He thought there would be no difficulty, from what they heard, in obtaining a large number of good homes. Unfortunately, a large number of these children, he was afraid, were sent to these homes for the purpose of getting rid of them and never seeing them again, and in many cases they had been so neglected that their lives were shortened. In regard to the question of the appointment of inspectors they had evidence that in a great many places in the larger areas of the country no inspectors had been appointed to inspect the homes in which two or three children were kept, or that inspectors had in the first instance been appointed, but after that no appointments had been made, and the provisions as to inspection had become a dead letter. This Bill said that public bodies "may" appoint inspectors, but he thought it should be altered to "shall," so that all these homes should be inspected. There was a clause in the Bill which gave power for taking away little girls from immoral houses. Of course there was a distinction between the dangers to little girls and little boys in those houses, but he should say that it was desirable to remove little boys also, and he did not see why they should not be included in the clause. In Clause 106 it was provided that children under sixteen should not be allowed to pawn clothes, and he had had evidence before him that there was a great deal done in the pawning of little children's clothes by drunken parents. He knew that an objection was made to any law which prevented pawnbrokers from taking little children's clothes, because it was said that the parents might wish to raise money on the clothes of dead children or cast-off suits. But in those cases the parents would not want to pawn them, but to sell, as they could get a better price than it was possible to get on a pawn ticket. He was told that in many cases children were provided with clothes for the purpose of going to church, chapel, or Sunday school, but on Monday morning the drunken father or mother took the clothes and pawned them till the following Saturday. He thought it would be a good provision to prohibit pawnbrokers from taking children's clothes in pawn. He understood that in some parts of the country, and he believed in Edinburgh, the police acted in conjunction with the charitable organisations to prevent the pawning of children's clothes. As to the question of fireguards, the accounts of accidents were terrible. Fireguards were extremely cheap, and a great many benevolent people were quite willing to provide them in cases where the parents were too poor to do so. The charges of overlying were often of a very serious character. He heard not long ago of a case where a woman had lost four or five children in this way in succession and apparently did not care whether they died or lived. He welcomed the Bill, and hoped it would soon pass through the House, for he believed it met with general approval.

*SIR HENRY CRAIK (Glasgow and Aberdeen Universities) pointed out that under the present condition of discussion it was impossible for those Members who were not on this particular Committee to which this Bill would be referred to have anything to say as to the form the Bill would take, except in the present limited discussion, though many of them were interested in the subject, and had spent their lives in studying schemes to ameliorate the conditions of the children. One thing that had struck him in the course of the debate was that the criticisms upon the Bill had all followed a very usual course. It was the experience of all accustomed to administrative work to find that objection was taken to the inefficiency of some part of the machinery; but the moment an attempt was made to touch the evil, the moment machinery was introduced which was to work drastically and efficiently and to remedy the evil, all sorts of objections were raised—the great social objection referred to by the hon. Member for Sunderland, or else some interference with the liberty of the individual, raised by many Members, and so on. It was, however, impossible to make an omelette without breaking eggs, and a great social reform of this kind could not be carried out without interference with personal liberty, and possibly with a good deal that might be picturesque enough in ordinary life. They wished to rescue "Oliver Twist" out of the clutches of "Fagin," and in the process it might become necessary to take "Little Nell" away from her grandfather. With regard to the gipsy clauses, it was said the proposals of the Bill interfered with the picturesque and free side of life. No one would suggest such a thing as that who had seen the actual conditions under which the gipsy children lived. It was not said by the one man in Scotland who knew most about the reality as well as the poetry of Scottish life—Sir Walter Scott. In the "Heart of Midlothian," and still more in the "Highland Widow," he stripped the life of all its picturesqueness, and pointed out what was the real state of degradation under which these people lived. In certain parts of Scotland he had seen it himself. He had entered the caves where some of these gipsies lived on the Caithness coast, and if after what he had seen people thought no change was called for, he could not understand their feelings. It was the same with regard to the drastic remedy proposed for overlying. That evil could not be remedied without something that would strike terror into the hearts of the careless, or those who were neglectful of their duties of motherhood. That could only be done by drastic machinery, which was always apt to be objected to as interfering with personal liberty. One point he desired to impress on the hon. Gentleman was that it would not do to try and carry on all this remedial work of raising these waifs and strays as if it were part of the great educational work of the country. It was not educational but remedial work. And the work which was being dealt with in this Bill was more or less of a penal kind. It could not help being so. It had to deal very often not with the regular inhabitants of the locality where these persons were found. They were waifs and strays jettisoned by society—thrown by chance into a particular locality. Therefore it was not fair to lay the whole burden on the locality as was done in the case of ordinary education. The central authority of the State must step in in this case with a larger share of public money to the assistance of the locality which needed it. The local authorities often found that the public opinion of the locality was not behind them in spending adequately upon such remedial and casual work as this, urgent as it was. These waifs and strays had no one to stand up and criticise the provisions which were made for them, and the State must therefore step in, and while it imposed a high standard, must also largely assist the locality in maintaining that standard. This was not a municipal burden, it was a work that must be carried out at the expense of the State.

MR. L. HASLAM (Monmouth Boroughs) called attention to what he believed was an omission in the Bill, viz., that there was no provision to prevent insuring children by foster parents. Baby farmers ought not to be allowed to have any advantage in the case of the death of a child, and he suggested a clause by which it should be not only illegal for the foster-parents to insure children but for any company or person to insure them. He understood that the Home Secretary was prepared to introduce a clause to that effect, and he hoped it would receive the cordial assent of the House.

LORD EDMUND TALBOT (Sussex, Chichester) congratulated the Under-Secretary upon one feature of the Bill, which he described as contrasting very favourably with other legislative efforts of the Government in regard to children. As he read the Bill, adequate and definite consideration was given to the religious denominations to which the children belonged. That very important part of the rights of the child and the parent as regards religion was properly safeguarded. In certain quarters an impression prevailed that the Catholic community was against the inspection of the one child homes. That, however, was not the case. It was not a religious question at all, and the Catholics were as much divided upon it as other people. Personally he was against inspection, but he was perfectly satisfied with the Report of the Committee and the exemptions that were recommended by that Report, the recommendations of which the Under-Secretary by this Bill was attempting to carry out.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed to a Standing Committee.

EXPLOSION (GLENAHIERY).

*MR. HAVILAND BURKE (King's County, Tullamore) rose to call attention to all the circumstances connected with the explosion at Lord Ashtown's Lodge, Glenahiery, and to move, "That, in the opinion of this House, the interests of truth and justice require a full public inquiry upon oath into all the circumstances connected with the explosion at Lord Ashtown's shooting lodge at Glenahiery on 14th August last, including the subsequent attempt made to incite a number of the inhabitants of the County of Galway to commit an outrage upon Woodlawn Church on 31st August last." He felt himself confronted, he said, by a very great and obvious difficulty, the difficulty of stating, on an occasion when they had only two hours and three-quarters left for discussion, the whole of the facts of a case which was not only very mysterious, but in his opinion, of the very gravest character, demanding the most searching and merciless inquiry by the Executive that claimed to be fair and impartial in its dealings between man and man in Ireland. He wished to recall the fact that, in the first instance, the explosion at Glenahiery was of a character almost unprecedented in Ireland. It was not caused by an infernal machine, or dynamite cartridge, which could be carried in a man's pocket; it was caused, according to the official evidence, by means of a large iron pot of considerable weight, a balk of timber, several quart bottles, assumed to have contained paraffin oil, some yards of specially manufactured fuse, a wheelbarrow, and a pole of wood. One of his hobbies had always been the study of criminology, and he remembered distinctly, when he opened his paper which contained news of the outrage, saying to his friends that the thing on the face of it was not done hastily by one man, that it had been done deliberately, and with not the least hurry, and that far more than two men, let alone one man, had been concerned in it. So far, this case had not been tried by a jury, not even by a jury of respectable Orangemen. It had been tried in the first place by County Court Judge Fitzgerald, and tried next on appeal by Mr. Justice Kenny. Against the personal integrity of these Irish magnates he had not one word to say. At the same time it was the merest affectation to assume that a strong party man ceased to think about politics, or the bearings of general events upon political parties, because he was translated to the judicial bench. Judges were amply protected in that House against any undue criticism in the discharge of their duties, although he might remind the House that the first thing they did after the great Revolution was to put a curb upon the great and dangerous increase of powers of the Judges of the land. And he was bound to say that since Judge Jeffreys, in the era of James II., publicly threatened an English juryman that he would get his nose slit for him if he did not consent to a hanging verdict, few worse displays had been made from the Bench than the display made by County Court Judge Fitzgerald on the first hearing of this case. Now he wished to say to begin with——

Mr. MOORE (Armagh, N.): On a point of order. I should like to ask if it is in order—[NATIONALIST cries of "Yes, it is."] This is not a matter to be decided by hon. Gentlemen below the gangway; it is for the Deputy-Speaker. I wish to ask, Sir, whether it is in order for an hon. Member to say of a County Judge in Ireland that he is the worst example of judicial misconduct on the Bench since the time of Judge Jeffreys.

*Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER (Mr. CALDWELL): It is a well-known rule of the House that no reference of a derogatory character should be made to a Judge, and I hope that the hon. Member will withdraw it.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.) said that his hon. friend spoke of Judge Fitzgerald, not in his capacity of County Court Judge, but in his capacity arising from his being authorised under the statute to decide malicous claims.

*Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: There is no distinction. It is not a question of executive or administrative functions. I call upon Mr. Haviland Burke.

Mr. HAVILAND BURKE and Mr. Moore rose together, and there were loud NATIONALIST cries of "Shame," "Name," and "Sit down."

*Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Armagh has risen to a point of order.

Mr. MOORE: Mr. Deputy-Speaker, is it your ruling that the statement should be withdrawn? [NATIONAL cries of "No."]

*Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: It was rather out of order, but I did not think it necessary to call upon the hon. Member to withdraw.

*Mr. HAVILAND BURKE said that when interrupted he was about to say that he held no brief from District-Inspector Preston or any other member of the autocratic and military police force, which they believed to be extravagant, overmanned, and overpaid, and over which the Irish people and the representatives of the Irish people had no control whatsoever. But this matter of District-Inspector Preston did gravely concern the public administration of justice, and he said, and said it deliberately, with all respect to the feelings of the hon. and learned Gentleman who had just interrupted him, that if District-Inspector Preston had been a thrice convicted criminal, if he had been a notorious and habitual offender, if he were a ticket-of-leave man when he came before County Court Judge Fitzgerald, he could not have been more hectored, bullied, and insulted from start to finish than he was on that occasion. And moreover, with all respect to County Court Judge Fitzgerald's personal character, and to the acute sensitiveness of the hon. and learned Member who had just interrupted him, he wanted to point out that the County Court Judge assumed, as the whole ascendancy party in Ireland habitually assumed, that a policeman's word was law and gospel as against a Nationalist, or against a Member of Parliament representing a Nationalist constituency; but if once in a way, just by accident, a policeman was so presumptuous as to express doubts in favour of the people, then he was a whited sepulchre and a traitor to his duty. He would ask the hon. and learned Gentleman and his friends: Did they really think they could get any man of the world inside or outside the House to believe that an ambitious police official who wanted to curry favour in high quarters and to gain distinction and promotion would choose the method of doing, saying, or writing anything to hurt the feelings of a big Irish landlord and a peer of the realm? It was absolutely preposterous. If District-Inspector Preston had reported in the first instance that the United Irish League emissaries had been busy in the district and that he attributed the bomb explosion to the activity they had displayed—if he had expressed the conviction that the deed was done locally as an act of agrarian or political vengeance—then he would have been the curled darling of the hon. and learned Gentleman. He would have been a prophet of the true gospel, the upholder of law and order against an effete and corrupt executive, and he would have stood higher in the opinion of the hon. and learned Gentleman and the low-down, anti-Irish English gutter Press that was fed by Lord Ashtown and by Members above the gangway. He had, however, the audacity to express a doubt as to the culpability of the local people. He challenged any hon. Member on the Orange benches to get up and say it was so; but, if the hon. Gentleman above the gangway could produce evidence of reasonable ground for suspicion that there was a local Sergeant Sheridan in the case and of police complicity in this outrage, they would do their honest best to help them to track down the criminal policeman and have him punished, although they could not promise to assent to the immunity and hush money that Sergeant Sheridan and his satellites got from the Unionist Government. But, if there was no allegation of police complicity in this case, why should they have this forensic howl against District-Inspector Preston's Report? If he wanted anything to justify the phrase he had used, which might have been strong, and to which the hon. and learned Gentleman had taken objection, he could not do better than quote two or three phrases used by County Court Judge Fitzgerald in delivering judgment in censure of District-Inspector Preston. He alluded to what he called the egregrious document which had been called the Report of District-Inspector Preston, and then said—

> "As to the circumstances in which the so-called report was manufactured, I have my own opinion, but I say nothing."

Again, by way of showing his views against the District-Inspector, he went out of his way after he had actually delivered his judgment to say respecting the area of the outrage that he would ask County-Inspector Jennings to consider that question, as, in consequence of the opinion he had formed of District-Inspector Preston, he would not ask his assistance. Profiting by those eminently refined and impartial remarks, the next move in the Orange game was to represent that the original Report was, as the County Court Judge put it, manufactured, but if they could get at the original Report sent in by District-Inspector Preston, they would find that it was mild as compared with the scorching fire which blazed forth at the first hearing. Their law and order friends, in the Press and through other channels, had asked for the publication of the original Report, and they got it, and at the same time they caught a tartar. He had the original Report arranged in pages parallel with the Report against which County Court Judge Fitzgerald fulminated and raved so voluminously, and he found that so far from the original Report being milder than the one upon which very largely the County Court Judge had to adjudicate, the Report before him was a milk-and-water Bowdlerised edition of the Report originally sent in by Mr. Preston, and that if the Report before the County Court Judge was cooked at all it was cooked handsomely in Lord Ashtown's favour. He would exhaust his time if he alluded to the many passages in the original Report which were omitted, in his opinion with gross impropriety, under Castle influence, from the Report upon which the original proceedings were taken, but there were two omissions to which he might call some attention. The inspector said, for instance, in his original Report that he was actually obstructed in the execution of his duty, and that he had difficulty in getting information. He said that Alice Cudd, the sister of the wife of Lord Ashtown's gamekeeper—the more they went into this Ashtown business the more they saw what a merry crowd and how closely related they were—who showed temper at being questioned at all, whose demeanour was flippant, gave impertinence to the District-Inspector who, in the ordinary discharge of his duty, had the audacity to ask her some questions as to the facts relating to the explosion. He said another thing, also omitted from the second edition, and he thought this was a most important matter. Any man accustomed to study human nature and police cases and criminal trials would see its importance. The Inspector said, in his original Report—

> "At this point it occurs to me to put upon paper what has struck me all along as unusual and not to be expected—the fact that the women of the household had taken the whole matter calmly and had never shown the least sign of alarm or natural fear, quite the contrary."

He put his own construction upon that, and it was that the ladies of the house were not in the least surprised and had some inkling of what was going to happen. But he would leave District-Inspector Preston's Report. The next sheet-anchor of the people who wanted to make this slur upon an Irish national movement was to say that County-Inspector Jennings was dead against the District-Inspector. The only difference of opinion between County-Inspector Jennings and District-Inspector Preston was as to whether the window was open or not at the time of the explosion. District-Inspector Preston was of opinion that it was, and he was confirmed in that opinion by the evidence of the Home Office expert. He noticed that Mr. Justice Kenny, in his summing up, said he had three experts on one side and one on the other, and that other things being equal he would prefer the opinion of the three experts to the one. What did that amount to? It was as if after a railway collision the Board of Trade sent down its special inspector to make a report as soon as possible after the accident, and that then when somebody injured in the collision brought an action for damages against the Company he could bring up three experts who were not on the spot for weeks or months, when everything was put in order and tidied up, and the Judge told the jury to prefer the opinion of the three experts to the independent expert who was there as soon as possible after the disaster. Again, County-Inspector Jennings said, and this was going to lead him up to a graver chapter of his argument by and by—

> "Lord Ashtown suspects none of his Waterford tenantry for the outrage. He is of opinion that it was planned by some of his Woodlawn tenants, aided by someone in the neighbourhood of Glenahiery."

This remarkable passage followed—

> "It is inconceivable how any man would approach the house, as in this instance, and run risks of detection with practically four armed, and experts in use of firearms, on the premises. I do not believe any of the natives would countenance or conceive such an outrage."

It might be of interest that he should remind the House that Mr. Graham, the mysterious gamekeeper who belonged to Lord Ashtown's *menage*, was one of those rolling stones that gathered no moss. He had never kept any responsible employment for any substantial period, and always appeared to treat Glenahiery as a safe harbour of refuge. He had furthermore, to dwell upon the fact that he had been several times in trouble with the police, and that actually since this outrage he had been sentenced to a term of imprisonment for wanton and unprovoked assault, and was, for some mysterious reason that he could not fathom, relieved by the authorities at Dublin Castle of the results. As he said, one sentence that he had just read in County-Inspector Jenning's Report led them up to a graver chapter in the case. They had been blamed for trying to connect the anonymous letters inciting certain Galway people to crime with the Glenahiery bomb outrage, and with Lord Ashtown. But who originally drew in the name of the Galway people to the Glenahiery business? It was Lord Ashtown himself. It was the explanation he gave to the local police. He did not believe any of his neighbours had done it. He said right out two or three times that it was the Woodlawn tenants, with whom he had had difficulties, who were responsible. Before he passed from that aspect of the case, he could not avoid reference to an ugly fact in Lord Ashtown's own conduct. At the first hearing of his claim for compensation he was asked, Was he, or was he not, responsible for an article describing the outrage and life generally in that neighbourhood, that appeared in a very respectable and widely-read weekly paper in London. He point-blank denied all knowledge of the article, of responsibility for it, or of having given his signature, and only at the last moment, when beaten to the ropes under cross-examination by the hon. and learned Member for South Louth, confronted with the presence, at the second trial, of a special representative sent over by that paper to be there and give him the lie from the witness chair, then and only then did he admit that his article in *Answers* was not a concoction, that he was responsible for it, that he did give his signature for it, and he was censured by Mr. Justice Kenny for his previous evasions. The utmost plea that could be entered for Lord Ashtown was that he was the victim of occasional acute paralysis of the mnemonic faculties. If hon. Members on the Orange Benches preferred that definition of his mental state, he was perfectly willing to give them the benefit of the doubt. It made no difference whatever as to the value of Lord Ashtown's testimony on oath, or the anti-Irish garbage which he retailed for the benefit of the Unionist Press in this country. What was the next fact they had to deal with? It was that shortly afterwards a number of letters were posted from Dublin inciting certain Galway men in the precise locality Lord Ashtown had indicated as being the locality that had been most criminal in this outrage, inviting them to plant a bomb outside a local church with a view to injuring him. Those letters were written when Lord Ashtown himself was in Dublin, but more than that happened. Simultaneously he wrote to the police saying that he had good ground to believe that an attempt at this outrage would be made in Woodlawn on the very date bargained for in the letter sent to the Woodlawn people from Dublin. As the hon. Member for Galway had pointed out Lord Ashtown warned the police before he left Dublin, and the County Inspector went to Lord Ashtown and said: "Where did you get the information upon which you applied for special police ambush against a proposed outrage upon a definite date? Will you show us the letter or give us the information upon which you proceeded?" But Lord Ashtown point blank refused. The few points he had tried to place before the House in themselves justified the Resolution he had moved, and however strong they might seem to some of his opponents he thought the case justified the words he had used in support of his Resolution. An active campaign was being directed at the present moment by certain hon. Members for Ireland, who were, so far as he knew, and he was happy to know it, the only body of legislators in any legislative assembly in the world who made it their daily task of joy to defame the country in which they lived, and the people they represented. He had never heard of an instance in any Parliament or in any country, where a regularly constituted political Party filled the Notice Paper of that Assembly with Questions tending to show that the people whom they represented were abnormally criminal and required abnormal measures of repression. Lord Ashtown in himself was not a very important individual, and the ratepayers who had been mulcted in a couple of hundred pounds would easily survive that infliction. The fine on those ratepayers, unjust as he believed it to be, was a mere trifle compared with the principle involved, which was that the one thing upon which all the local police, the District and County-Inspectors and constables alike, were agreed, was that there was no local feeling whatsoever against Lord Ashtown, and the utmost length that County-Inspector Jennings—whom it had been attempted to play off against Inspector Preston—could be got to go, was that when he was asked if he had any opinion as to whether the outrage was done by insiders or outsiders, he said that he would not express any opinion. He absolutely refused under pressure to say that he had any reason whatever to believe that the outrage was inspired by local animosity. With great respect he contended that it was a case for a sworn inquiry, which he felt sure would show that at the bottom of it there was something worse than had yet been revealed and for which responsibility should be tracked down. He begged to move.

MR. POWER (Waterford, E.) said that the Glenahiery outrage had naturally excited great interest in Ireland, but it had excited in the constituency which he had the honour of representing a special interest. Hon. Members might not be aware that if an accidental fire occurred, or malicious injury was perpetrated in Ireland, the ratepayers of the district were called upon to pay the damage. In England no such law prevailed, and they hoped to lay before the House in a very few days a Bill for assimilating the law in Ireland in this respect to the law in England, and they would ask the support of hon. Members to bring the present state of things to an end. He had an exceptional opportunity last summer of witnessing how different the laws were in the two countries. He happened to be at Droitwich shortly after the occurrence at Glenahiery, and as Droitwich was a loquacious place that incident was talked about, and he heard all sorts of speculations as to what Ireland was coming to. Matthew Arnold once said that the born swallower of all clap-trap was the British Philistine, and they were well represented at Droitwich. It happened that about the same time in the Midlands there occurred a series of the most shocking mutilations of cattle and horses, including the great Wyrley case. There were many of those outrages, and the people who owned the mutilated horses and cattle had to bear the loss themselves or provide against it by insurance. There was one thing about those outrages which struck him, and it was that if anything like them had occurred in Ireland they would have been placarded not only over the whole of England, but possibly over the whole of the world. Fortunately for England, there was not an organisation in this country whose object it was to blacken the character of the English people. It was a very bad characteristic for any person to endeavour to blacken his own country, however bad it might be, but what were they to say of an organisation which took little or no care as to the truth or accuracy of the reports which they circulated broadcast, or of the pictures painted in lurid colours, which were calculated to injure Ireland with the object of imposing coercion upon that country. He might say on behalf of his colleagues and himself that they hated and detested that pandering to the base passions of any people. They did not like raking up those things, but when they went down to the constituencies of those hon. Members who were parading the shortcomings of Ireland, it was rather remarkable that they were able to show such a state of criminality that made the contrast most appalling. His hon. friend who had moved this Resolution had referred to District-Inspector Preston's Report. He did not intend to go into that subject at much length, but he wished to say that they held no brief to defend Inspector Preston, and all he would say was that he hoped he would never witness again such a painful exhibition and want of self-control as he witnessed at the Court where this case was tried. He remembered that District-Inspector Preston ventured to say a word, and in a most peremptory way he was told to sit down or he would be put out of Court. There happened to be slight applause in one of the galleries when he went up there, and the learned and impartial Judge told the police to clear out the ragamuffins, who, by the way, included such men as the Chairman of the County Council and other most respectable people. The same thing had occurred in other parts of Ireland.

The right hon. and learned Gentleman who acted for Lord Ashtown spoke of Inspector Preston as the new Sherlock Holmes. The evidence of District-Inspector Preston was corroborated in the most extraordinary way by the evidence of Captain Lloyd, one of His Majesty's inspectors of explosives, who was sent over by the Home Office to make inquiry, and Captain Lloyd's evidence had not been contradicted seriously by any evidence yet produced. Mr. Hagreave, who was examined for Lord Ashtown, and would naturally be anxious to give favourable evidence, said—

> "That the balance of probabilities was certainly in favour of the door being shut."

That was all the exception he took to the report of Captain Lloyd, a gentleman whose life was spent in investigating such matters. District-Inspector Preston had been held up to odium for the action he had taken in the matter. He was informed, though he could not vouch for the truth of it, that District-Inspector Preston was the son of an Orangeman, and that his grandfather was an Orangeman, so that if he had any leaning at all it would have been on the side of Lord Ashtown rather than that of the people. The whole thing was only part and parcel of a conspiracy to defame Ireland. It might be in the recollection of the House that Lord Ashtown stated that, in his opinion, the plot originated in Galway, and that it was carried out by Galway men. A Mrs. Walsh approached Lord Ashtown with the view of finding out who the conspirators were. She wrote to Lord Ashtown, and after various letters had been sent to him and his agent she met Lord Ashtown in the agent's office, and the result was that she went to Galway and saw several people. Various letters were written, and several other letters were sent in the same handwriting to constituents of his hon. friend the Member for East Galway, who had done his best to unravel the mystery. She failed to get any direct evidence, and the most extraordinary anonymous letters were written to Mrs. Walsh stating among other things that a certain number of men were to meet at Woodlawn at eleven o'clock at night outside the church and opposite the pew which was usually occupied by Lord Ashtown when he attended there. On the strength of that anonymous letter the police were asked to be in ambush. Five letters were sent in the same handwriting to the constituents of his hon. friend asking them to be there at eleven o'clock. Fortunately for themselves they never went there, because the police were brought across the fields, so that they should not be met by anyone, with the view of capturing anyone who might be implicated. It was said that that was done because Lord Ashtown gave the police the information. What he and his friends wanted to know was how Lord Ashtown got the information. His constituents were deeply interested in the matter. He believed that the campaign of vilifying Ireland, of holding up their shortcomings to the gaze of the world, was doomed to failure, and he believed it would fail in one respect. This Protestant Federation was, he believed, determined to fan up religious fanaticism as much as they could in Ireland. What strange things were done in the name of religion! He found that they made bad blood between Catholic and Protestant. He did not know what the result would be among Protestants, but he said with pride that he knew that among the Catholics of Ireland they would never succeed in stirring up that bitter feeling of animosity among those who differed from them. It had been the proud boast of Ireland—and God will that it should remain so—that if they found a man true to the people, they cared not from what land he came, from what class he sprang, or at what altar he might choose to worship. Their politics had always been essentially unsectarian, and they would hunt from political life as a renegade anyone who endeavoured to raise that wretched spirit of religious animosity. When he heard of intolerance among Orangemen, in his heart he blamed them hardly in the least, for this reason, they had been brought up in that spirit of intolerance, and if one generation was educated in that spirit it would take many generations to undo the work and to remove the poison which had been instilled into them. In a remarkable speech on the bigotry in connection with the class of Protestant schools prevailing in Ireland, Lord Byron said—

> "Better send children to those islands in the South Sea where they might more humanely learn to become cannibals — it would be less disgusting to see them brought up to devour the dead than to persecute the living. Schools do you call them! Rather call them dunghills where the viper of intolerance trains her young that when their teeth are cut and their poison is mature they may issue forth filthy and venomous to sting the Catholic."

Well had the lesson been learned, and he said, with all confidence on the part of Catholics, that they would never retaliate in a spirit so lowering and degrading on those who differed from them. They and their forefathers had learned the lesson of religious toleration in the best of all schools—in the bitter school of persecution—and in the words of another eminent Englishman—

> "The children of martyrs can never be persecutors."

He begged to second the Motion.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That, in the opinion of this House, the interests of truth and justice require a full public inquiry upon oath into all the circumstances connected with the explosion at Lord Ashtown's shooting lodge at Glenahiery on 14th August last, including the subsequent attempt made to incite a number of the inhabitants of the county of Galway to commit an outrage upon Woodlawn Church on 31st August last."—(*Mr Haviland-Burke.*)

Mr. MOORE said he could not help thinking, when he heard the reference made by the seconder of the Resolution to the avaricious maw with which the British Philistine swallowed clap-trap, that the observation must have been particularly odious to the mover, who addressed the burden of his remarks to British Members. He had heard a very spirited defence of Mr. Inspector Preston, for which that gentleman would be duly grateful. He had heard repeated over and over again, under privilege of the House, unworthy insinuations against the honour and uprightness of character of Lord Ashtown, and suggestions of complicity on the part of Lord Ashtown in the explosion at Glenahiery. [Cheers from the IRISH Benches.] He was glad to hear those cheers, which showed that he was not wronging hon. Members below the gangway. He thought it was a hard thing that, under the shelter of the privilege of the House, a man should be attacked in that way after having faced the music, and having twice gone through the Courts. [Ironical cheers from the IRISH Benches.] He understood the contempt which hon. Members below the gangway had for all Courts of Justice. After Lord Ashtown had run the risks of two Courts, after he had stood the cross-examination of special counsel brought down from Dublin to blacken his character, it was a hard thing that when the findings had been conclusively in his favour, the same insinuations should be repeated under the privilege of the House of Commons in a manner which they dared not repeat outside. Did the House realise in what position Lord Ashtown stood? Lord Ashtown had been attacked that night by the proposer and seconder of the Resolution, who had stated in so many words that in their opinion he was a defamer of the Irish people. He put it to the sense of fair-play on the part of hon. Members below the gangway that, however much they might agree or disagree with a man's action in political criticism—he did not care how intense the disapproval might be—was it a justifiable thing, because they disapproved of Lord Ashtown's methods of criticism, to come there and repeat under the protection of the House, insinuations affecting in the grossest way Lord Ashton's personal character, and suggesting his connection with an outrage for which, if proved, he would be in ordinary course under custody? Lord Ashtown's defamation consisted in printing, publishing, and circulating extracts from the identical newspapers which were the organs of hon. Members themselves. It was no shame for those papers to make the statements, but it was a shame for Lord Ashtown to extract them and circulate them! However much hon. Members disapproved of such defamation, it did not warrant them to repeat there, under privilege, insinuations against Lord Ashtown which, if proved, would drive him into disgrace for ever. The House had just listened to a very eloquent and moving peroration—not his own—of the hon. Member for East Waterford about the viper of intolerance. Did the hon. Member agree with him that the viper of intolerance should be crushed out? [Cheers from the IRISH Benches.] He concurred in those cheers, but he did not concur in the suggestion made by the hon. Member that the viper of intolerance was only bred to sting Roman Catholics. Lord Ashtown was a Protestant; he lived in the west of Ireland. He was unpopular, and the reason was that he was the champion of the Imperial Protestant Alliance. [IRISH cries of "Oh, oh," and "No."] He was only taking the ground occupied by the hon. Members below the gangway, and he wanted the House to consider how far the viper of intolerance in Lord Ashtown's case had been bred to sting Roman Catholics. Lord Ashtown could not walk up his own avenue without the protection of a patrol of four policemen, and he carried a shot-gun with him every day of his life. Twelve months ago a man was indicted in his own county, at the Galway Assizes, for inciting to murder Lord Ashtown. It was not an incitement sent by post to one or two people, but an incitement made to an excited and crowded audience on a public occasion.

AN IRISH MEMBER: Were not a large number of police present on that occasion?

MR. MOORE said that the fact that a large number of police were present showed the character of the audience, and that the police were required to maintain order. The Solicitor-General for Ireland, who always discharged his duty with great ability, prosecuted the man who was indicted for inciting to murder Lord Ashtown, and the hon. and learned Gentleman told the jury—he could say nothing else—that it was a clear case, and that on the Crown side they were entitled to a conviction. The Judge also said that it was a clear case, that the evidence was all one way, and that the incitement had been made almost at Lord Ashtown's own hall-door. However, the jury triumphantly acquitted the prisoner, and no further action was taken under the present Administration. That was a case where the viper of intolerance was brought up, but not to sting a Roman Catholic. Lord Ashtown had a gamekeeper to prevent trespassers on his property, and on two occasions within the last eighteen months his gamekeepers had issued summonses against men for poaching on the estate. Gamekeeping was not a popular business in some quarters, but assuming the existence of the viper of intolerance, it happened that the gamekeeper in this case was a Protestant. One of the men, as soon as the summons for poaching was issued, took out a cross-summons for assault. The taking from him of the rabbit which he had poached constituted the assault by the gamekeeper! As soon as the Protestant gamekeeper complaining of trespass by the man came before the bench of magistrates the case was dismissed as trumpery, and the prosecuting gamekeeper was lodged in gaol for assault. So gross was this, that even the Government which was loth and slow to run across the wishes of hon. Members below the gangway, telegraphed, without waiting for a process of *certiorari*, to the prison authorities to liberate the prosecuting gamekeeper. That had happened twice within the last eighteen months. If in England such a case had happened the Lord Chancellor would have moved the magistrates from the Bench, but in Ireland there still remained a sure and certain hope that the next time the gamekeeper summoned a man for trespass, similar treatment would again be dealt out to him. These were the conditions under which Lord Ashtown enjoyed existence! Reference had been made to Judge Fitzgerald. He had nothing but praise for Judge Fitzgerald, having known him long before he went on to the Bench at Waterford; and under stress of public life he would be sorry to hear anything said derogatory to that gentleman. As a Judge in a case which came before him he gave a decision according as he saw it his duty to do. After that, Judge Fitzgerald proposed to hunt on the plains of Meath where he had hunted for years; but the local branch of the Irish Land League said he was an absolutely unfit man to ride to the hunt in his own country, and that if he did so they would break up the hunt. [An

IRISH MEMBER: And properly so.] Did the House want any further corroberation of what he had just stated than the interruption of the hon. Member below the gangway? Judge Fitzgerald was consequently obliged to go to England for his hunting amusement, but there was no viper in that case, because Judge Fitzgerald was a Roman Catholic. In the case in the County Court about the explosion, there were several witnesses for Lord Ashtown, including Mrs. Graham and Graham himself, and it was their misfortune to give evidence. The witnesses were met by a hostile crowd on their way back from the Court and were hooted and stoned. They heard a lot about intolerance, but surely in the case of Lord Ashtown, who was treated as an unconvicted criminal, there had been a greal deal. Moreover, everyone who dared to lift up their hand in a Court of Justice and swear to what was true was assailed, as also was the Judge, and if there had been a jury they would have been boycotted. They had as an expert professional witness a gentleman named Scully, a surveyor, and because he swore on his oath that in his opinion a window was shut on the occasion in question, he was ordered by the Corporation of Waterford to send in his account, and his employment with them had been terminated because he attended upon subpœna and gave evidence in favour of Lord Ashtown. And yet they heard so much of intolerance. How was Lord Ashtown situated? His character had been twice investigated in regard to these most despicable charges, and it had twice been cleared when every possible effort had been made by witnesses and counsel to blacken it. And these attacks continued, notwithstanding the fact that on one occasion the counsel representing the opposing interest got up in Court and with all the sense of responsibility of a professional man said that not a shadow or vestige of charge was made against Lord Ashtown.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.) inquired if he correctly understood the hon. Gentleman to say that special counsel had been brought down with instructions to blacken Lord Ashtown's character?

MR. MOORE said he never intended to apply that to the hon. and learned Member. There was another special counsel who was brought down on behalf of the United Irish League, and anyone who read his examination would see that his instructions were to blacken Lord Ashtown's character. He said that, entirely unlike that counsel, the hon. and learned Member for Louth, who did not appear on that occasion, but on another with a full sense of his responsibility to those he represented, made no charge that Lord Ashtown was guilty of any personal or criminal complicity in any outrage.

A NATIONALIST MEMBER said there was no counsel brought down by the United Irish League. The other counsel to whom the hon. Member referred was employed by the ratepayers of the county.

MR. MOORE said he did not think it was necessary to pursue the inquiry as to how long these ratepayers had been members of the United Irish League or not.

A NATIONALIST MEMBER: They were defending their own interest.

MR. MOORE, continuing, said it was a hardship that, with all these circumstances in the knowledge of hon. Members below the gangway, again from those benches insinuations had been made against Lord Ashtown under the protection of the privilege of the House. Lord Ashtown had been placed in such a position that practically the only pleasure he had left to him was that of defending himself. In the face of the findings of these two tribunals recorded in his favour he did not see that Lord Ashtown had anything further to gain from an extraordinary inquiry. Why should he go to an extraordinary inquiry when he had already faced twice the regular tribunals of the land and left the Court according to the Judges without a stain upon his character? In the case of the hon. Member who was indicted and tried with great reluctance by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary at the Wicklow Assizes the jury disagreed.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. CHERRY, Liverpool, Exchange): By what authority does the hon. and learned Member say that the case was tried with great reluctance?

MR. MOORE: I did not say the case was tried with great reluctance, but he was prosecuted with great reluctance?

MR. CHERRY: On what authority does the hon. and learned Gentleman say that?

MR. MOORE: The authority of a conversation between the right hon. Gentleman and the Lord Chief Justice in which he said he regretted to have to prosecute Members of Parliament and lamented having to do so.

MR. CHERRY: Quite inaccurate.

MR. MOORE went on to say that in the case of the hon. Member he alluded to the jury disagreed and there was no suggestion of another trial. He did not want another trial, but merely desired to point out that while the hon. Member was held to be exonerated, in the case of Lord Ashtown, although a Court had found twice in his favour, the suggestion was made that he was allowed to go about an unconvicted criminal. He was not going to rely upon the presumption of British law that every man was deemed innocent until he was found guilty. That was not what hon. Gentlemen below the gangway held in dealing with the case of Lord Ashtown, their idea being that he was guilty until he was found innocent. But let the House suppose that Lord Ashtown was an innocent man, he had been treated in this case with great unfairness. If he was an innocent man, charges which were absolutely false had been sedulously distributed throughout the country and to the public that the noble Lord addressed through his monthly magazine. Those charges had been brought into existence five or six months ago, and published and circulated with all the authority which must necessarily attach to a document which could be claimed to be official. He made no charge whatever against the Executive Government of Ireland. He was dealing with subordinate officials with whom the Government would have eventually to thresh out matters, and at present he was dealing with the Report of 11th September, which was formulated to the public, and he was dealing with the man who had been praised and defended that evening below the gangway, District-Inspector Preston, because he was the signatory of that Report. He did not know how many statements District-Inspector Preston made against his own superiors, whether true or not, but by his Report the gravest injustice was done to Lord Ashtown if he was an innocent man, and not a tittle of evidence had been produced which would lead the House to assume Lord Ashtown's guilt. They had had a large amount of heated rhetoric, clouds of panegyrics and perorations, and a certain amount of argument, but absolutely without a new suggestion of fact from beginning to end. For seven months that charge of District-Inspector Preston had been circulated through the country as an official document, and if Lord Ashtown was an innocent man it did him grave injustice. What did that Report contain? They had it on the evidence of District-Inspector Preston who wrote it. There was no mistake on District-Inspector Preston's part as to how the statement of 11th September affected Lord Ashtown, because, on cross-examination at Dungarven, he admitted that his statement contained the inference of a most grave and terrible charge, that he knew it was contained in it, that he did not intend to convey it, and yet he signed it. That was the case at Dungarven in September, 1907. From that time to this every opportunity had been taken, by circulating that Report, to blacken Lord Ashtown's name. On 14th March, at the second trial, District-Inspector Preston made the same admission, and the men who circulated that Report knew that he admitted that he never intended to make that terrible charge, but had been obliged to sign it by order of his superiors. Was that fairplay to Lord Ashtown? That identical Report was part of the case on each occasion it came before the two Judges. Judge Fitzgerald recognised the serious import of that statement, and said that in his opinion there was no foundation for the imputations, charges, insinuations, and suggestions which from first to last had been heaped on Lord Ashtown and his innocent servants; and that those imputations had their origin mainly in the egregious document which had been called the Report of District-Inspector Preston. The other Judge dealt with it in the same way. That document was not only unfair, but it was irregular, and the person who was responsible for it was District-Inspector Preston, who was held up by hon. Gentlemen below the gangway as a model of a straightforward witness. It was irregular because it contained that terrible charge, and because he admitted he never intended to make it. The constabulary regulations were very clear and explicit on that point as would be seen if they were referred to. But the matter did not end there.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): We wish it did.

Mr. MOORE said that hon. Members had brought the statement forward and made the charge, but as soon as a person got up to examine it inch by inch he was continuously and unfairly interrupted. The lie had had six months run in the newspapers which reported hon. Gentlemen below the gangway. There was another instance of the conduct of District-Inspector Preston and his subordinates. Sergeant Ryley was produced at Dungarven in September and stated that he visited the premises the day after the explosion and saw Lord Ashtown, who was under the influence of drink, but on 4th March after that lie had been running for six months he went into the witness box and voluntarily withdrew that charge and admitted that he was mistaken. He said he had seen Lord Ashtown since and had studied his manner and was perfectly satisfied that he was not under the influence of drink. In spite of that this charge continued to be circulated, and that was another specimen of the very unfair treatment Lord Ashtown had had meted out to him from first to last. The time had come when the Government should say that, having had a full inquiry into the matter, they entirely acquitted, as two Courts had already done, Lord Ashtown of any share in the business. There were other extraordinary matters in the course of the trials. There was one about gunpowder. The explosion took place on 14th August. On the 17th County-Inspector Jennings became aware of the fact that a large quantity of gunpowder and the fuse with which it was said the explosion occurred had been purchased of a man named Kelly in Waterford. District-Inspector Preston, who was in charge of the inquiry, and was a subordinate of County-Inspector Jennings, never learnt that fact until 17th September, and more curious still the Inspector-General never heard of it until 3rd October. It was not until 4th October that the matter became public property when the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Waterford wrote a letter which appeared in the newspapers, saying it was common knowledge that that large quantity of gunpowder and fuse had been purchased. All that was in the knowledge of the County-Inspector and the District-Inspector at the trial before the County Court Judge, but not a word of it was tendered in evidence by the police who were engaged in clearing up the matter. Another curious thing was the extraordinary amount of inadvertence there had been in the case. From start to finish, when endeavours were made to find the explanation of certain events which were not clear at the trial, they had been met with the statement that such and such a matter was an inadvertence. District-Inspector Preston made extraordinary charges against his superiors. He said he was forced under professional discipline to put his name to a charge which he did not believe; that he was obliged to do it in the presence of the law officers, the Inspector-General and Sir Antony MacDonnell; that it was a matter of authority. One would have thought that when those statements were made on oath hon. Members who would be affected by the charges would have insisted upon an explanation. He would have thought that District-Inspector Preston would have been called on for an explanation of that charge which was found to have no foundation; that he would have been reprimanded, or that the authorities would have considered he was not a very efficient or safe police officer. But that generous flow of mercy which occasionally prompted the action of the right hon. Gentleman appeared and they were told that that momentary aberration on the part of District-Inspector Preston was a matter of inadvertence. The right hon. Gentleman told them on 11th March that the statements of District-Inspector Preston, a responsible police officer, were entirely inaccurate, and that it was only another instance of the hopeless confusion to which an unfortunate witness could be sometimes reduced when in the hands of an able counsel, and, with those excuses, the very grave charges made by District-Inspector Preston against his superior appeared to be allowed to drop. District-Inspector Preston stated that he had prepared an original draft, that his copy was taken, typed, and signed, and that then the original draft was destroyed. The Chief Secretary gave them an explanation, practically in those terms, on 11th March. He wanted to draw the attention of the House to the full import of that matter. He was not suggesting that there was not a perfectly adequate explanation. There were only two documents in existence. There was the original manuscript which the District-Inspector called the draft, and there was the typewritten copy taken from it, which was signed. The original draft, he said, was destroyed, and in his evidence the District-Inspector said it was burned. A question was raised at a later stage, and a more extraordinary conglomeration of inadvertencies he thought had seldom come to the knowledge of a person unaccustomed to such cases. On 30th March the Attorney-General told them that the document which the Inspector-General produced at the Waterford Assizes was not the original statement of 11th September furnished to the parties, but District-Inspector Preston's original unsigned draft of that statement, which was exactly what the Chief Secretary had told them on 11th March had been destroyed after a typed and signed copy had been made. The Attorney-General's attention was directed to that on the spot, and he said no statement had ever been made and the original had been destroyed. Those statements were absolutely irreconcilable. It was quite possible the right hon. Gentleman might have an explanation, but so many inadvertences and discrepancies——

MR. CHERRY: Does the hon. and learned Member suggest that the documents were destroyed on my suggestion, or on the suggestion of my right hon. friend?

MR. MOORE said he would have to ask the right hon. Gentleman again to do him the honour of paying a little attention.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL, on a point of order, called attention to the fact that the hon. Member had been speaking fifty minutes, when there was only a limited time for the discussion, and asked whether that was not an abuse of the liberties of the House.

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member introducing this Motion spoke nearly forty-five minutes.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: With great respect——

*MR. SPEAKER: However long the hon. Member speaks, I have no power to interfere.

MR. MOORE said that no interruption from below the gangway would deter him from doing his duty justly and fairly. On 29th February, in order to take adequate steps for the conduct of his case, Lord Ashtown's advisers wrote to Dublin Castle, asking if the Reports would be produced. They got a reply that they would not be forthcoming. Two days later the Attorney-General wired to the Castle instructing the Inspector-General to produce them, but, by another inadvertence, no step was taken to contradict the information already given to Lord Ashtown's advisers, who went down, not expecting to have the Reports, although, according to the statement of the Attorney-General at the time, they were entitled to have them. When the Inspector-General was called upon to produce the original statement of 11th September, he did not do so because, as the Attorney-General said in his answer, he had with him a marked copy, and he considered he could not hand that in. Then when asked on 30th September to produce it he claimed privilege, and, when the Attorney-General was asked why privilege was claimed for the Report, he said their instructions to produce the Report at the trial were not present to the mind of the Inspector-General. With such an accumulation of inadvertencies at Waterford Assizes, Lord Ashtown could, if the trial had been in any way adverse to him, have called for a new trial; but, in spite of them, he was able to succeed. The ratepayers who made the original charge against Lord Ashtown had withdrawn, and the Courts which tried his case had unreservedly acquitted him. These horrible and unfounded charges were absolutely and in every way unsustained. Every police officer called in the case, including District-Inspector Preston himself, told the Court that they had not a tittle or suggestion of evidence against Lord Ashtown. When asked, they one and all on their oaths said they had no evidence or suspicion against him, and, yet after the sworn evidence of that army of witnesses, hon. Members below the gangway attempted to raise suspicion against him again in that House. Reference had been made to the evidence of Major Lloyd, the Home Office expert. His evidence went to establish that the window was open and not shut and that, therefore, the explosion took place from inside. There had been a good deal of declamation on the part of hon. Gentlemen below the gangway because the Judge did not accept his evidence; but what was the evidence on the other side? Every police officer—County-Inspector Jennings, County-Inspector Richards, District-Inspector Tweedle, all competent men against whose characters not a word could be said—contradicted Major Lloyd. Mr. Hargreave, of the firm of Hargreave and Curtis, of London, a gentleman who ought to be just as good a practical man as Major Lloyd, swore that the window was down and the shutters barred. A second expert from Glasgow, Mr. Hunter, who had been trading in gunpowder all his life, gave evidence absolutely the same way. Some of these experts were on the spot before Major Lloyd. The County-Surveyor of Tipperary, Mr. Hackett, and Mr. Scurry, all gave evidence agreeing that the window was down and the shutters barred. That absolutely knocked the bottom out of the structure on which this terrible charge was based, that the outrage was committed from the house. He thought, when the House considered all the circumstances, they would think it unfair that such a charge should have been made that night. So far as Lord Ashtown was concerned, he did not think any further inquiry was required. The proper place to investigate a criminal charge was before the regular tribunals of the land with Judge and jury. If there should be an inquiry, then the proposals made were not adequate. There must also be an inquiry into the conduct of the subordinates who conducted the prosecution, and who made the statements containing that terrible charge against Lord Ashtown. The whole matter must be inquired into as to the inception of the charges and as to how the statement of 11th September, on which the hon. Members based their case, came into existence, and he moved an Amendment to secure that end.

MR. CHARLES CRAIG (Antrim, S.) said he would not detain the House many minutes in seconding the Amendment. He would like to recapitulate very shortly to the House, because he thought it had for the moment forgotten, the sequence of events. The explosion, which formed the subject of that debate, took place on 14th August last. A few hours after the explosion a police-sergeant arrived and made a Report, to which he had no objection of any sort. Later in the day County-Inspector Jennings together with the county-inspector of the adjoining county and a district inspector arrived on the scene, carefully examined the results of the explosion, and one of them at least, Inspector Jennings, made a Report practically on the spot, which was forwarded to headquarters in Dublin. The police authorities in Dublin, for some reason or other, did not see fit to leave the investigation of the crime and the conduct of the case generally in the hands of any of the three officers, but telegraphed to District-Inspector Preston, who had been detached from his ordinary duty in Waterford for special duty in the North of Ireland, to come back and take charge of the case. He arrived on the scene of the explosion on 17th August, inspected it, got together all the information he could, and then telegraphed to headquarters asking for a personal interview, he presumed, with the Inspector-General, and also for the services of an expert in explosives. Both these requests were granted. The services of Captain Lloyd were given him, and he went to Dublin and interviewed, he presumed, the Inspector-General. That information was contained in the first Report made on 7th September. Presumably after that interview he compiled the Report, which he supposed, in the ordinary routine of police business, was submitted to the Inspector-General before being handed over to the parties to the case. He was not in the slightest degree astonished, in fact, he would be astonished if it was otherwise, that the Inspector-General, or whoever read that Report, decided instantly that it was a Report which ought not to go any further. The reason was perfectly apparent why the Inspector-General did not wish it to see the light of day. A subsequent document, founded upon it, was called by one of the Judges who tried the case an egregious document. If he had had an opportunity of reading the first Report of Inspector Preston, he could not conceive what adjective he would have applied to it. Of all the ridiculous documents that ever came from the hands of one who was supposed to be an impartial person giving a calm and reasoned statement of what he saw, there never was the equal of that first Report of Inspector Preston. The instructions to police officers in Ireland said that the statement which they were expected to furnish should—

> "Have no relation to evidence which would indicate the views or suspicions of the police, but should simply be a record of the appearance presented by the scene when visited by the police."

Inspector Preston said in one place—

> "A searching examination led me to form a very definite conclusion—"

—that was the first thing he had no right to say—

> "That at the time the explosion occurred the window was wide open."

He had no right in the world to make any such suggestion as that.

> "Secondly, that the shutters of the window were neither shut nor barred and the drawing-room door was wide open."

Later on he said—

> "In view of the statements of Graham and Curran on 17th August, and the facts as regarded the window, I drew the four conclusions which I reported personally at headquarters on 20th August, and which I now repeat as they practically amount to facts: (1) Strangers would have been deterred from a criminal intention on finding the window unexpectedly open; (2) Had the perpetrators intended to kill Lord Ashtown they would have been more likely to do so if they had put the bomb inside the room, which was simple when the window was open; (3) To open the window shutters and door was calculated to minimise the damage by reducing the resistance; (4) If Graham's and Curran's statements are correct the shutters must have been unfastened by someone from inside between 9.30 and the time of the explosion."

There were many more peculiarities in that egregious document with which he need not trouble the House. Whatever authorities the Report came before, exercised a very wise discretion in deciding that it was not to be supplied to either party in the case. Another Report was furnished—a Report which was ostensibly founded on the Report from which he had read extracts, and that Report, although boiled down very considerably—he did not say in favour of Lord Ashtown, because there were several statements contained in the second which, had they been printed as they were originally made in the first, would certainly have been very much more in his favour, was sufficiently extraordinary to have had an instant effect when it was posted to the parties concerned in the case, one of them being the district council, which was the party against whom the action for malicious damage was brought. From one end of Ireland to the other, and in England also, to a very great number of people who read it the idea was at once borne home that Lord Ashtown was guilty of the abominable charge of trying to blow up his own house. Here was a document published and given a full week's start before any other document counteracting or minimising its effect in any way was sent out. For one week that document was allowed to have currency throughout the length and breadth of the land. He was not at the moment blaming anybody in particular for that. All he said was that that document having been published, the effect was that Lord Ashtown was looked upon, not only by hon. Members below the gangway, but by many persons in England probably with Unionist leanings, as the author of that vile deed. It was no wonder that they, the friends of Lord Ashtown, had taken a great interest in the matter and had scrutinised each step in its progress and everything connected with it. They were justified in doing so because the very first act of those responsible for the document was to throw, wittingly or unwittingly—and it was very hard to believe they did it unwittingly— a very heavy cloud of suspicion over Lord Ashtown. Without going into details he maintained that Lord Ashtown had thrown all those suspicions off in the most conclusive manner, and that, according to the evidence given at the two trials, to every fair-minded man Lord Ashtown stood to-day absolutely absolved from any complicity in the crime. One of the chief questions brought up at the trials was as to whether a certain window was open or shut. There were two witnesses who said the window was open. One was District-Inspector Preston, whose opinion he did not suppose anybody claimed to be better than that of the three other police officers who examined the scene of the explosion. The other was Captain Lloyd. District -Inspector Preston in his evidence admitted that he accompanied Captain Lloyd to the scene of the explosion and went round with him, without having at the same time any representative on behalf of Lord Ashtown, and pointed out the shutters lying on the floor, the burning window-sash, etc., and explained to him his own theory as to the windows being open. That was a very curious and significant fact, and to his mind very largely minimised any weight that might be attached to Captain Lloyd's evidence. On the other hand, every other witness who examined the premises said he had no doubt in his mind that the window was shut, the shutters were barred, and the pot had been put on the window-sill by some person outside. Another significant fact was that he left out from his Report practically all the information with reference to what he saw under the tree some 60 or 70 yards away. When giving a full statement the inspector ought to have put down all he saw beneath that tree. In the first Report drawn up by Inspector Preston he did state all he saw under that tree, but in his second Report he only reported the part which told against Lord Ashtown. The two Judges before whom the case was tried both said in the most distinct terms that there was no jot of evidence to prove that Lord Ashtown or any one in his house had any part in the outrage.

MR BELLOC (Salford, S.): Both Judges were Unionist hacks.

Mr. Charles Craig.

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member's observation is most improper. In the first place it is an interruption which is not permissible, and in the second place it is grossly offensive. [Cries of "Withdraw."]

MR. BELLOC: I withdraw. [Cries of "Apologise."] And I apologise.

MR. CHARLES CRAIG said that he and his hon. friends would be failing in their duty if they did not try to elucidate the question and clear the character of Lord Ashtown. They welcomed, therefore, the opportunity again given to do their best to remove the unjust suspicion resting against Lord Ashtown, and in that he felt perfectly sure that they had been successful. And then as to the case of Minnie Walsh.

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order. The hon. Member must confine himself to the Amendment.

MR. CHARLES CRAIG said the Amendment was supposed to apply to the whole Resolution, and he understood that the idea of the mover of the Resolution was that if there was to be an inquiry the whole case of Minnie Walsh, as well as the case of Lord Ashtown, should be inquired into. As to the case of Minnie Walsh, he said that on two occasions it had been stated by the Attorney-General, on behalf of the Crown, that he had not made the slightest accusation against Lord Ashtown. Every letter that had passed between Lord Ashtown or his agent and this lady had been at once communicated to the police. ["No."] It was impossible to argue in the House of Commons a legal case which had been argued in Court and that was not the place to do it, but he stood by his statement that every letter which passed between Minnie Walsh and Lord Ashtown and his agent was handed to the police as soon as it was received. The whole thing was a job. Heaven knew by whom it was got up, and all he had to say was that the House and the country had the word of the Attorney-General for Ireland and the Chief Secretary that Lord Ashtown had no more to do with that outrage than he had.

Amendment proposed—

"In line 4, after the word 'last,' to insert the words 'including the action of the police authorities, and all the circumstances connected with the preparation, contents, and circulation of the police reports, and of the statement of the 11th September, 1907, signed by District Inspector Preston relating thereto, and.' "—(*Mr. Moore*).

Question proposed, " That those words be there inserted."

Mr. CHERRY said he was sorry he could not give way to the hon. Member for East Mayo, as there was not much time left and somebody must speak on behalf of the Government. The hon. and learned Member for North Armagh, who moved the Amendment now before the House, had done so in a speech of unusual length for a Wednesday evening debate, and another long speech had followed, the effect being to exclude a large number of hon. Members who desired to take part in the discussion. He proposed to take notice of one or two of the hon. and learned Member for North Armagh's remarks before he stated the case for the Government. The hon. and learned Member began his remarks by making some observations about Lord Ashtown being very unpopular, and he stated that because he was a Protestant he was unable to go about in the county of Waterford without the protection of a gun and the police. Personally that observation he certainly must resent very much, for he knew, and every person who came from Waterford or Galway knew, that no man would be attacked there because he was a Protestant.

Mr. MOORE said he was being misrepresented. He stated that Lord Ashtown was unpopular because he was a Member of a Protestant circle. [A Nationalist Member: You are a slanderer of Ireland.]

Mr. CHERRY said the impression conveyed to him by the hon. and learned Member's remarks was that Lord Ashtown was unpopular and required the protection of firearms because he was a Protestant. That was a statement that he resented very much, because he was a native of the county and he knew no man who was attacked by reason of his being a Protestant, and the statement was directly traversed by the Report of County-Inspector Jennings, who was supposed to be the friend of Lord Ashtown. At the end of his Report, Inspector Jennings, dealing with the question as to whether he thought the outrage had been committed by persons in the neighbourhood of Glenahiery, said that he did not believe that any of the native would countenance or conceive such an outrage, because Lord Ashtown had always been well-disposed towards his tenants, and appreciated by them as a landlord. The Inspector stated that Lord Ashtown was popular in the district, that there was no ground for suggesting that anybody in the neighbourhood committed the outrage, and that he was quite satisfied that those tenants who had been suspected of committing the outrage were quite incapable of carrying out such a plan. He had been able to trace satisfactorily the movement of several local persons whose names were suggested as being implicated. As he was trusted with a free hand in the case, he thought it hardly necessary or expedient to set forth in detail the methods adopted by him.

Mr. DILLON (Mayo, E.): Would you read the opening part of the District-Inspector's second Report ?

Mr. CHERRY said the later Report contained the following—

> " I visited the scene again yesterday and spent a considerable time in looking into matters in connection with my first visit. It was by no means clear what was the motive, or how or where the outrage was planned. The only point of which there is no doubt is that whoever placed the explosive engine had a thorough knowledge of the domestic arrangements."

A curious thing about the Report was that it was one of the documents which the Government were charged with suppressing. It was moved for by an hon. Gentleman opposite, and it was published at his request. The hon. and learned Member who moved the Amendment had made some reference to the unpopularity of Lord Ashtown, and had gone on to say that he made no charge against the executive Government, his only charge being against the subordinates of the Government. Only the Government, however, were there to answer; the subordinates were away. After the last seven or eight months, during which, on the platform and in the Press, the Government had been charged with fraud and actual forgery in connection with the matter, he thought that was a cowardly attitude to take. The charges were made, among other places, in Court, where the Government were not represented, and where a Member of that House, appearing as counsel for Lord Ashtown, turned what ought to have been the trial of a Civil matter into an attack on the Government as regarded their conduct of public affairs. When the Government came to the House prepared to face their accusers the charges were withdrawn. [An HON. MEMBER: Not withdrawn.] The hon. and learned Member, after formally withdrawing the charges, went on to make insinuations practically repeating the charges made in Ireland of falsifying reports and suppressing documents. [An HON. MEMBER: Who made the charges?] The charges were made by the right hon. Gentleman opposite and by Lord Ashtown himself.

*MR. JAMES CAMPBELL (Dublin University) said there was not one particle of truth in that statement. He never made any such charge against the Government until District-Inspector Preston stated to him in Waterford that he had put his name to this Report of the 11th under the coercion of the Inspector-General, that he did not believe the contents of it, and that, so far as he knew, the contents were false. When the District-Inspector said that, he replied—

> "Very well. I withdraw any imputation against you, and the blame should rest on your superiors who compelled you to do this."

MR. CHERRY said the right hon. Gentleman addressed a meeting in Dublin on 28th November before the Primrose League, and in the *Irish Times* there was a full report, headed "Paralysis of the Law in Ireland." In that speech the right hon. Gentleman said that the circumstances would yet be brought to the light of day, and when revealed would form the most discreditable incident in the lifetime of the present tottering and discredited Government from whom might God grant them a speedy and happy deliverance. The right hon. Gentleman also addressed speeches to two Judges, and both speeches contained a violent attack on the Government, and totally disregarded the facts of the case he was supposed to be stating. What had been the action of the Government? The first they knew of the matter was on 11th September, when they heard Inspector Preston's Report. It occurred to them that that Report contained a number of statements which were grossly compromising to Lord Ashtown. It also contained a number of statements which it occurred to his learned colleague and himself it was only fair that Lord Ashtown should know before the hearing before the County Court Judge, but they were anxous also to protect him from statements which were not direct evidence, but only hearsay evidence, obtained by Inspector Preston from his subordinates. They therefore directed the inspector to prepare a statement of the facts giving only the facts to which he could himself depose and excluding any inference from the statements of other parties. He obeyed that instruction to the best of his ability, and any person who could say that that second document was cooked or prepared for the purpose of injuring Lord Ashtown said what was absolutely contrary to the facts. For eight months the Government had been attacked on the platform with a violence seldom equalled even in the busy politics of Ireland. When certain documents were published Members of the House, friends of Lord Ashtown, suggested that there were other documents more friendly to Lord Ashtown, and asked that they should be published. Now that the Papers were in the hands of hon. Members, he would ask anybody to say whether the papers which were published or those which the Government were accused of suppressing were the more fair to Lord Ashtown. Absolutely unfounded as the charges were against the Government—and he believed hon. Gentlemen opposite knew them to be unfounded, although they had not the courage to withdraw them—they were still more unfounded, if that could be possible, against the permanent officials Sir Neville Chamberlain and Sir Antony MacDonnell. Both were gentlemen high in the service, and both were incapable of dishonourable conduct. [An HON MEMBER: "What about the inquiry?"] It would be impossible to hold an inquiry which would be of any real use. The only power the Government had was to appoint a Vice-Regal Commission, and that Commission would have no power to compel the attendance of witnesses, or to administer an oath. The only alternative would be to have a special Act of Parliament passed, and with the amount of business before the House now it would be utterly impossible to pass a Bill for the purpose of setting up a fresh tribunal with the requisite powers. In a case of this kind, where there was such a conflict of testimony and such serious charges made, it was highly undesirable that anybody should be examined before a tribunal not empowered to administer the oath. Therefore he hoped the hon. Member would withdraw the Amendment.

Mr. DILLON: Before we go to a division I only wish to say we are for an inquiry. The one point made plain by this debate is that hon. Members above the gangway are afraid of an inquiry.

Mr. MOORE asked leave to withdraw the Amendment.

Mr. WALTER LONG (Dublin, S.): Before the Amendment is withdrawn, I would like to say that it is impossible for us to reply to the speech of the Attorney-General, which I may say was not the most fortunate speech under the circumstances, and in view of what has fallen from the hon. Member for East Mayo, I have only to say that throughout the whole of this matter we have contended that any inquiry ought to be complete and thorough, and I entirely agree that an inquiry other than by oath would be ridiculous and a farce. In these circumstances, so far as Lord Ashtown is concerned, we maintain that he ought to be defended from the bench opposite in the face of the fact that the inquiries which have already been held have cleared him. If a special Act of Parliament were to be passed in this case, there are many other matters which would have to be dealt with.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Main Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 110; Noes, 137. (Division List No. 66.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N. E.)
Ambrose, Robert
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Barnes, G. N.
Belloc, Hilaire Joseph Peter R.
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Boland, John
Bowerman, C. W.
Burke, E. Haviland-
Byles, William Pollard
Clancy, John Joseph
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Craig, Captain James (Down, E.)
Crean, Eugene
Crooks, William
Delany, William
Devlin, Joseph
Dillon, John
Duffy, William J.
Duncan, C. (Barrow-in-Furness
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Fetherstonhaugh, Godfrey
Ffrench, Peter
Fiennes, Hon. Eustace
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Fletcher, J. S.
Flynn, James Christopher
Foster, Rt. Hon. Sir Walter
Gilhooly, James
Gill, A. H.
Glover, Thomas
Grayson, Albert Victor
Gwynn, Stephen Lucius
Hall, Frederick
Halpin, J.
Harvey, W. E. (Derbyshire, N. E.
Haslam, James (Derbyshire)
Hayden, John Patrick
Hazleton, Richard
Healy, Timothy Michael
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Hodge, John
Hogan, Michael
Hudson, Walter
Jowett, F. W.
Joyce, Michael
Kekewich, Sir George
Kelley, George D.
Kennedy, Vincent Paul
Kettle, Thomas Michael
Kilbride, Denis
Lamb, Edmund G. (Leominster
Lardner, James Carrige Rushe
Law, Hugh A. (Donegal, W.)
Lundon, W.
Macdonald, J. R. (Leicester)
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah (Down, S.
MacVeigh, Charles (Donegal, E.)
M'Calmont, Colonel James
M'Kean, John
M'Killop, W.
Meagher, Michael
Meehan, Patrick A. (Queen's Co.
Mooney, J. J.
Muldoon, John
Murnaghan, George
Murphy, John (Kerry, East)
Murphy, N. J. (Kilkenny, S.)
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nolan, Joseph
Nugent, Sir Walter Richard
O'Brien, Kendal (Tipperary Mid
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Doherty, Philip
O'Donnell, C. J. (Walworth)
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Kelly, James (Roscommon, N.
O'Malley, William
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
O'Shee, James John
Phillips, John (Longford, S.)
Power, Patrick Joseph
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Richards, T. F. (Wolverh'mpt'n
Roberts, G. H. (Norwich)
Roche, John (Galway, East)
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Seddon, J.
Shackleton, David James
Sheehy, David
Smith, F. E. (Liverpool, Walton)
Smyth, Thomas F. (Leitrim, S.
Straus, B. S. (Mile End)
Summerbell, T.
Taylor, John W. (Durham)
Wadsworth, J.
Waldron, Laurence Ambrose
Walsh, Stephen
Watt, Henry A.
Wilkie, Alexander
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid)
Wilson, J. H. (Middlesbrough)
Wilson, W. T. (Westhoughton)

Tellers for the Ayes—Captain Donelan and Mr. Patrick O'Brien.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Agnew, George William
Allen, A. Acland (Christchurch)
Allen, Charles P. (Stroud)
Baker, Joseph A. (Finsbury,E.)
Balfour, Robert (Lanark)
Baring, Godfrey (Isle of Wight)
Barker, John
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Barry,Redmond J. (Tyrone,N.)
Beale, W. P.
Beck, A. Cecil
Bellairs, Carlyon
Bennett, E. N.
Berridge, T. H. D.
Birrell, Rt. Hon. Augustine
Boulton, A. C. F.
Bramsdon, T. A.
Bright, J. A.
Brocklehurst, W. B.
Bryce, J. Annan
Burt, Rt. Hon. Thomas
Causton,Rt Hn.RichardKnight
Cawley, Sir Frederick
Chance, Frederick William
Cherry, Rt. Hon. R. R.
Churchill, Rt. Hon. Winston S.
Clough, William
Cobbold, Felix Thornley
Collins,Sir Wm.J.(S.Pancras,W
Compton-Rickett, Sir J.
Corbett,C H (Sussex,E.Grinst'd
Cory, Sir Clifford John
Cowan, W. H.
Craig, Herbert J. (Tynemouth)
Crosfield, A. H.
Davies, Ellis William (Eifion)
Davies, W. Howell (Bristol, S.)
Dickinson,W.H.(St. Pancras,N.
Dobson, Thomas W.
Duckworth, James
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)
Edwards, Sir Francis (Radnor)
Esslemont, George Birnie
Evans, Sir Samuel T.
Everett, R. Lacey
Fenwick, Charles
Findlay, Alexander
Freeman-Thomas, Freeman
Fuller, John Michael F.
Fullerton, Hugh
Gladstone,Rt.Hn Herbert John
Glen-Coats,Sir T. (Renfrew,W.)
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Lewis
Hart-Davies, T.
Haslam, Lewis (Monmouth)
Haworth, Arthur A.
Hazel, Dr. A. E.
Hedges, A. Paget
Helme, Norval Watson
Higham, John Sharp
Hobart, Sir Robert
Hope,W.Bateman (Somerset,N
Horniman, Emslie John
Howard, Hon. Geoffrey
Hutton, Alfred Eddison
Hyde, Clarendon
Illingworth, Percy H.
Isaacs, Rufus Daniel
Jardine, Sir J.
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Johnson, W. (Nuneaton)
King, Alfred John (Knutsford)
Laidlaw, Robert
Lambert, George
Lamont, Norman
Lever,A. Levy (Essex, Harwich
Levy, Sir Maurice
Lloyd-George, Rt. Hon. David
Lough, Thomas
M'Callum, John M.
M'Crae, George
M'Laren, Sir C. B. (Leicester)
Manfield, Harry (Northants)
Marks,G.Croydon (Launceston)
Massie, J.
Menzies, Walter
Micklem, Nathaniel
Middlebrook, William
Mond, A.
Montagu, E. S.
Montgomery, H. G.
Morse, L. L.
Morton, Alpheus Cleophas
Newnes, F. (Notts, Bassetlaw)
Nicholls, George
Nicholson,Charles N.(Doncast'r
Norman, Sir Henry
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nussey, Thomas Willans
Pickersgill, Edward Hare
Radford, G. H.
Rees, J. D.
Rendall, Athelstan
Richards,Thomas (W.Monm'th
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roberts, Charles H. (Lincoln)
Robinson, S.
Roe, Sir Thomas
Rowlands, J.
Runciman, Walter
Russell, T. W.
Samuel, Herbert L.(Cleveland)
Sears, J. E.
Silcock, Thomas Ball
Simon, John Allsebrook
Sinclair, Rt. Hon. John
Smeaton, Donald Mackenzie
Spicer, Sir Albert
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Tennant,Sir Edward (Salisbury
Tennant, H. J. (Berwickshire)
Thomas,David Alfred (Merthyr
Thompson,J.W.H (Somerset,E.
Tomkinson, James
Toulmin, George
Walters, John Tudor
Waring, Walter
Wason,John Cathcart (Orkney)
Whitbread, Howard
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whitley, John Henry (Halifax)
Whittaker, Sir Thomas Palmer
Wiles, Thomas
Williamson, A.
Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh. N.
Winfrey, R.

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. J. A. Pease and Mr. Herbert Lewis.

FERRIES (IRELAND) BILL.

Read a second time, and committed to a Standing Committee.

CHILDREN [EXPENSES].

Committee to consider of authorising the payment out of moneys provided by Parliament of any expenses incurred under any Act of the present session to consolidate and amend the Law relating to the Protection of Children and Young Persons (King's Recommendation signified), To-morrow.—(*Mr. Pease.*)

LOTTERIES AND ADVERTISEMENTS.

Lords Message [25th March], relating to the appointment of a Joint Committee on Lotteries and Advertisements, considered.

Ordered, That a Select Committee of Five Members be appointed to join with a Committee to be appointed by the Lords to inquire into the law :—(1) as to lotteries, including the sale of lottery bonds, competitions for prizes which involve an element of chance, and advertisements relating there to (2) as to indecent literature and pictures and advertisements relating to things indecent or immoral; and to report what Amendments, if any, in the law are necessary or desirable.

The Committee was accordingly nominated of :—Mr. Beckett, Mr. Herbert

Craig, Mr. Hastings Duncan, Mr. O'Malley and Mr. Henry Joseph Wilson.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That Three be the quorum.

Message to the Lords to acquaint them therewith.—(*Mr. George Whiteley.*)

DUBLIN STEAMBOAT SERVICE.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the House do now adjourn."

MR. CLANCY (Dublin County, N.): I desire to put a question either to the Chief Secretary for Ireland or the Postmaster-General with reference to a very curious, if not a very serious, state of things which has arisen at Kingstown Harbour in connection with the mail service, and the permission given to the London and North Western Railway Company to use the Carlisle Pier at that place. Two telegrams have been handed to me in the course of the evening. The first says—

> "When "Ulster" landing mails and passengers, Harbour Master's representative attempted by force to prevent the ship's rope being let go, and in doing so assaulted company's packet porter in charge of the rope. Attempt was unsuccessful, and vessel swung and got into her usual berth. Will wire any further information."

The second telegram read—

> "Harbour Master has issued notice to Captain Birch to move ship to buoy."

I presume away from the pier.

> "He will not, of course, comply. If he did morning mail could not go out, and company would be liable to heavy penalties. Shall wire again if anything transpires."

The question I have to put is whether either of the right hon. Gentlemen have any information on the subject, and whether they can confirm, deny, or explain these statements. If they cannot do so, will they take immediate steps to ascertain the exact state of things at Kingstown? It must be perfectly obvious to the Postmaster-General that if the mail steamers are not allowed to remain at their usual berths, they will not be able to comply with the contracts into which they have entered with His Majesty's Government, and, I suppose, in that case, the Postmaster-General will hardly put the company to the cost of an action to recover the heavy penalties for which they are liable by any failure to deliver the mails in time. I cannot say anything more on the subject now, but it is quite obvious from what I have read that a serious state of things has arisen, and that possibly we are only at the commencement of a state of things still more serious. I must say that, for my own part, I have convinced myself that the action of the Government and the Treasury in coming to this arrangement with the London and North Western Company, which has led to the state of things mentioned in these telegrams, is a most important one for the Port of Dublin. It has robbed the Port of Dublin of £5,000 a year, and that is a thing which the Postmaster-General, the Chief Secretary, and the Secretary to the Treasury may take from me will be debated in this House on every possible opportunity.

MR. MOONEY (Newry): Before any reply is given, I should like to say I also have received a telegram in connection with the same matter. It reads as follows—

> "When "Ulster" was moving into her berth to start to-morrow morning a notice was received from the Harbour Master ordering her master not to move the vessel from her present moorings without authority. Captain Birch disregarded the order. Had he obeyed it the "Ulster" would have sustained serious damage at low water, and been unable to take out the the mails to-morrow morning, in all probability. When one of the packet porters was ordered to throw the rope off the bollard to move the ship, Superintendent Talbot ordered him to desist, and arrested him for not obeying the order. The superintendent informed the managing director, who was present, he would take bail, and accordingly Mr. Watson proceeded to the police station to give the required security.—Watson."

The Postmaster-General ought to have that information before he makes any statement.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.): This is an attempt by the Treasury to hold the King's mails exactly comparable to the case in which a postboy in Galway is carrying the King's writs to put the people out of their cabins, and in which the people sometimes assemble, seize the postman, and destroy the writs. They do that to save their lives and their cabins. The Treasury, which is now supreme in all, are doing this in order to save a few ducats. What I want to know is this, Are we governed by the Treasury or by the King? Who is in command of the police? Why are the

King's officers lent in a dispute pending in London in the King's Court, where a Petition of Right is being tried on this question? Why should the Chief Secretary lend the armed forces to take one side in this dispute? Really the time has come when we shall have to take the Treasury thugs by the throat. They seem to be superior to the law. We will have to take some stand with reference to this Treasury action. I do not care who is right or who is wrong in the matter. There is at this moment pending in London a matter in which it must be declared, "Let right be done." That is signed by the King, and here are vessels getting a subsidy of £1,000,000 for twenty years, and the Treasury see the chance of saving a few hundreds with the London and North Western, which swindles Dublin out of £5,000 a year, and the Treasury, in order to promote this sordid arrangement, break in upon every tradition of the law, and actually get the Chief Secretary to lend the Dublin police, for which the city of Dublin is paying £40,000 a year, to swindle Dublin out of £5,000 a year. Is Ireland governed by a Treasury clerk or by a Cabinet Minister? The insolence of this body will have to be put down. We will have to have a separate Department to deal with Irish affairs. That is not "separatism." We will have to have a Select Committee to inquire into the Treasury conduct. We will not allow a single action of the Treasury to go forward without inquiry. As for the Post Office, they have always been the slaves of the Treasury, because they are dependent upon them; but Ireland is supposed to have an independent Minister, and here we have the fact of the Chief Secretary lending his police to take part in this dispute. He has, in my opinion, vindicated the action of the Galway peasants, who seize the postboy who is carrying writs.

THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON, Tower Hamlets, Poplar) The hon. Member told me that he would raise the question on the adjournment. The telegrams were not then in my possession, I had no such information myself. I have no doubt the information contained in them will be conveyed to the Treasury, and to me, in the morning, and meanwhile, I am sure the House would not expect me to give any expression of opinion with reference to it now. I would remind the House that the whole question is *sub judice*—

MR. T. M. HEALY: Then why call the police?

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: The question being *sub judice*, the point remains: upon which side action should be taken? The whole matter is a very difficult and delicate one to deal with, and of course, my interest in it, as Postmaster-General, is in the effective carrying of the mails. To-morrow, no doubt, I shall have full information upon the subject.

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): I gather from the right hon. Gentleman that he will make inquiry by telegraph, so as to be in a position to give us information at question time to-morrow.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (MR. BIRRELL, Bristol, N.): I may say I have lent no police to anyone. I have heard of this matter now for the first time, and it was only when the telegram was read I became acquainted with it. I will also make inquiries by telegram.

MR. MOONEY: If the right hon. Gentleman finds that what has been stated is correct will he order the immediate release of the porter?

MR. BIRRELL: I will do what I can.

MR. CLANCY: I will to-morrow put Questions both to the Chief Secretary and the Attorney-General with regard to this question.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman why any official has dared to take any such action without consulting him?

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. RUNCIMAN, Dewsbury): I wish to say on behalf of myself and the Treasury, that the first I heard of this matter was at five minutes to eleven. As far as the Kingstown harbour is concerned we will never consent to its being under the control of any private company.

MR. T. M. HEALY: That is not the question.

Question put, and agreed to.

House adjourned at twenty-nine minutes after Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Thursday, 2nd April, 1908.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Tramways Order Confirmation (No. 1) Bill [H.L.].—Committed.

Bromley and Crays Gas Bill; Glyncorrwg Urban District Council Bill; Lincoln Corporation Bill.—Brought from the Commons, read 1^{a}, and referred to the Examiners.

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill [H.L.].—Read 2^{a} (according to order).

Bristol Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Bristol Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Keighley Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Wath-upon-Dearne Urban District Council Gas Bill [H.L.]; Ravensthorpe Urban District Council Bill [H.L.]; Rhymney and Aber Valleys Gas and Water Bill [H.L.]; Leith Burgh Bill [H.L.]; Ammanford Urban District Council Water Bill [H.L.]; Llanelly and Burry Port Water Board Bill [H.L.]; Conway and Colwyn Bay Joint Water Board Bill.—Report from the Committee of Selection, that the Earl of Albemarle be proposed to the House as a Member of the Select Committee on the said Bills in the place of the Earl of Verulam; read, and agreed to.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

PETITIONS.

LAND VALUES (SCOTLAND) BILL —PETITION AGAINST.

The Earl of CAMPERDOWN: My Lords, I beg to present a petition from the county council of the county of Forfar against the Land Values (Scotland) Bill. They say that, being entrusted with the administrative and financial business of that county, they have carefully considered the Bill, and are of opinion that it should not receive the sanction of Parliament for the following among other reasons—*videlicet*, that the Bill in requiring the capital land value of lands and heritages, not being lands and heritages falling to be valued by the Assessor of Railways and Canals, to be entered in the Valuation Roll, would, if passed, entail enormous expense upon counties without conferring upon them any corresponding benefits, that the Bill does not state any purpose for which it is necessary or desirable that the said capital land value should be entered in the Valuation Roll; and that in any case no good purpose can be served by entering in the Valuation Roll the capital land value of agricultural lands in counties where both the land and the buildings thereon belong to the same person.

Ordered to lie on the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

LOTTERIES AND INDECENT ADVERTISEMENTS.

Message from the Commons that they have appointed a Committee to consist of Five Members to join with a Committee of this House to consider the said subject, and request this House to appoint an equal number of Lords to be joined with the Members of their House.

TRADE REPORTS: ANNUAL SERIES.

No. 3967. Finances of Denmark.

Presented (by command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

UNIVERSITIES (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1889.

Annual Report on the state of the finances of the University of Glasgow under the provisions of Section 30 of the Act, for the year 1906–1907.

SUPERANNUATION.

Treasury Minute, dated 30th March, 1908, declaring that Mr. George Samuel Newth, Lecture Assistant, Normal School of Science, Board of Education, was appointed without a Civil Service certificate through inadvertence on the part of the head of his department.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

UNIVERSITIES (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1889.

University Court Ordinances—

No. 24. (Aberdeen, No. 2.) Regulations for Degrees in Arts.

No. 25. (Aberdeen, No. 3.) Regulations as to Bursaries, etc.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and to be printed. (No. 45.)

SMALL HOLDINGS AND ALLOTMENTS (SCOTLAND) BILL [H.L.].

House in Committee (according to Order).

[The Earl of Onslow in the Chair.]

Clauses 1 to 26 agreed to.

Clause 27:

Lord SALTOUN moved an Amendment to the effect that no land should be authorised by an Order under this Act to be acquired compulsorily which, at the date of the Order was being "used for drying or repairing fishing nets." He explained that land round a great many towns on the sea coast was very much used for this purpose, and the object of his Amendment was to safeguard that land in the interest of fishermen.

Amendment moved—

"In page 18, line 32, after the word 'like,' to insert the words 'or being land used for drying or repairing fishing nets.'"—(*Lord Saltoun.*)

The Earl of CAMPERDOWN said he did not think it desirable to insert in the Clause more exceptions than were needed, but at the same time he was quite prepared to accept the Amendment which his noble friend had proposed.

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Clause 27, as amended, agreed to.

Remaining clauses agreed to, and Bill reported with an Amendment to the House and recommitted to the Standing Committee, and to be printed as amended. (No. 46.)

SUNDAY CLOSING (SHOPS) BILL [H.L.].

Amendments reported (according to Order); and Bill to be read 3ª on Tuesday next.

POST OFFICE CONSOLIDATION BILL [H.L.].

[Second Reading.]

Order of the day for the Second Reading read.

The Earl of GRANARD: My Lords, this is purely a Consolidation Bill, which, with the exception of certain Acts that have since been added, was submitted to a Joint Committee of both Houses of Parliament in 1896. I trust your Lordships will give the Bill a Second Reading.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*The Earl of Granard.*)

On Question, Bill read 2ª, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Tuesday next.

MUNICIPAL REPRESENTATION BILL [H.L.].

Read 3ª (according to order), and passed, and sent to the Commons.

COUNTY COURTS BILL [H.L.].

[Second Reading.]

Order of the day for the Second Reading read.

The LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord Loreburn): My Lords, I need say but very few words in asking your Lordships to give a Second Reading to this Bill. It deals with various points, not themselves connected, and it is the same Bill as your Lordships agreed to on the Motion of my predecessor. Last year the Bill was introduced by myself; it passed through this House, but, unfortunately, shared the fate of other measures which could not be disposed of elsewhere. I will only say that the Bill does not in any way represent my idea of what ought to be done in connection with an amendment of the law relating to County Courts. There are two important points which deserve attention. I referred to one last year—the character of the jurisdiction in regard to what I call imprisonment for debt, for in substance it is imprisonment for debt. I have been very anxious to make proposals in regard to that; but I think a wise course has been taken in the appointment of a Select Committee of the House of Commons for the purpose of investigating the subject, for undoubtedly there is a controversial aspect. The second point is this. It is more than thirty years since the Judicature Commission recommended that the High Court of Justice and the County Court should form part of one system instead of being separate and independent, as they are now; and, although Lord Cairns did not approve of the recommendation at the time, he subsequently changed his mind and brought in and carried through this House a Bill for the purpose of giving effect to that recommendation I will not say that that ought to be done at once. I am satisfied that it cannot very well be done without some inquiry, and I intend to propose an inquiry. I ask to be excused for referring to those two matters even so shortly, because I do not wish it to be supposed that this Bill represents all that I think might be done, or, indeed, ought to be done, in regard to the business of, and arrangements relating to, County Courts.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

LORD ASHBOURNE: My Lords, I trust that there will be no difficulty about the passing of this Bill, and coming as it does with the recommendation of the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack, I have no doubt your Lordships will be prepared to give it a ready acceptance. I presume that in the present state of public business it is not desirable to overload any Bills; but I hope I may ask for the assistance of my noble and learned friend in inserting an Amendment to allow the solicitor profession to be represented on the rule-making authority.

On Question, Bill read 2ª, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House.

House adjourned at twenty minutes before Five o'clock, till To-morrow, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Thursday, 2nd April, 1908.

The House met at a quarter before Three of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Bromley and Crays Gas Bill; Glyncorrwg Urban District Council Bill; Lincoln Corporation Bill. — Read the third time, and passed.

Dover Graving Docks Bill; Louth and East Coast Railway (Transfer) Bill; Dundalk Urban District Council Bill.—Reported, with Amendments; Reports to lie on the Table, and to be printed.

Knott End Railway Bill.—Reported, with Amendments [Title amended]; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

Herne Bay Pier Bill [Lords]. — Reported, without Amendment: Report to lie upon the Table.

Bill to be read a third time.

PRIVATE BILLS (GROUP E).

Colonel **SEELY** reported from the Committee on Group E of Private Bills; That, for the convenience of parties, the Committee had adjourned till Monday next, at Twelve of the Clock.

Report to lie upon the Table.

PETITIONS.

COAL MINES (EIGHT HOURS) (No. 2) BILL.

Petitions against: From Liverpool; and, Mining Association of Great Britain; to lie upon the Table.

EARL, WILLIAM ROBERT ALBERT.

Petition from William Robert Albert Earl, for redress of grievances; to lie upon the Table.

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL.

Petitions from Westhall, against; to lie upon the Table.

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL.

Petitions in favour: From Truro; and, Yeovil; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSING BILL.

Petitions against: From Bath; Billinghurst; Birmingham; Bradford; Colgate; Easebourne; Eccleshall; Greasborough (two); Hemmingfield; Kilnhurst; London and other places; Middlesbrough; North Bucks; Rawmarsh; Rotherham (four); Sheffield (eight); Swinton (twelve); Thornhill; West Sussex (three); and Woking and Cranleigh; to lie upon the Table.

Petititions for alteration; From Colne and Nelson; Daventry; Helidon; Sunday School Union; Truro; and, Wigston Magna; to lie upon the Table.

Petitions in favour; From Ardwick; Barrow-in-Furness (two); Batley (three); Belper; Bridport; Berry (three); Caersalem; Canterbury (three); Coppington; Coppenhall; Cramlington Colliery; Crewe; Didmarton; Dobwalls; Durham; East Looe; Eccles (two); Garstang; Glasgow; Halifax; Higham; Kelvedon; Lancaster (seven); Liskeard (four); Littlehampton; Llanedwen; Llangristiolus; Luddenfoot; Motherwell; New Delaval; New Kilpatrick; Northowram; North Salford; North Shields; North Walbottle; Ossett; Pendleton; Pensilva; Polruan; Ringwood; Rothesay (two); St. Andrews; St. Helens; St. Hilary; St. Mary's (Scilly); Sheffield; Shotton; Southsea; Streatham (two); Street; Thornby; Timsbury; Tunbridge Wells; Waring Green; West Dulwich; and, Yeovil and Sherborne; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSING BILL AND LIQUOR TRAFFIC (LOCAL OPTION) (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Stranraer, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

LIQUOR TRAFFIC (LOCAL OPTION) (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Paisley, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

OUTDOOR RELIEF FRIENDLY SOCIETIES ACTS, 1894 AND 1904.

Petitions from Bothwell, for extension to Scotland; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY BILL.

Petition from Middlesbrough, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

SHOP BILLS.

Petition from Westminster, against; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

CROWN'S NOMINEE ACCOUNT.

Abstract Account presented, of receipts and payments of the Treasury Solicitor, in the year ended 31st December, 1907, in the Administration of Estates on behalf of the Crown, and Alphabetical List of Intestates' Estates in respect of which Letters of Administration were granted to the Treasury Solicitor as Crown's Nominee, and of other cases (partial intestacies, &c.) in which accounts were opened in the Books of the Treasury Solicitor in the same year, in respect of moneys received by him as Crown's Nominee [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 113.]

SUPERANNUATION ACTS, 1884.

Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated 30th March, 1908, declaring that Mr. George Samuel Newth, Lecture Assistant, Normal School of Science, Board of Education, was appointed without a Civil Service Certificate through inadvertence on the part of the Head of his Department [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

Copy presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Report, Annual Series, No. 3967 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

UNIVERSITIES (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1889 (ORDINANCE).

Copy presented, of University Court Ordinance No. XXIV. (Aberdeen, No. 2) (Regulations for Degrees in Arts) [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 114.]

UNIVERSITIES (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1889 (ORDINANCE).

Copy presented, of University Court Ordinance No. XXV. (Aberdeen No. 3) (Regulations as to Bursaries, &c.) [by

Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 115.]

UNIVERSITY OF GLASGOW.

Copy presented, of Abstract of Accounts of the University of Glasgow for the year ending 30th September, 1907 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 116.]

PAPER LAID ON THE TABLE BY THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE.

Criminal Appeal Rules, Copy of the Criminal Appeal Rules, 1908 [by Act].

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Bonlahy Letter Arrangements.

MR. J. P. FARRELL (Longford N.): To ask the Postmaster-General whether any petition has been received by him from the inhabitants of Bonlahy, County Longford, and neighbourhood, for an evening as well as a morning clearance of the pillar-box there; and will he direct that this be done.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) The petition to which the hon. Member refers has been duly received, and inquiry is being made. I hope shortly to be able to send a reply.

Coventry Post Office Medical Officer.

MR. JAMES O'CONNOR (Wicklow, W.): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that the medical officer of the post office at Coventry is about 85 years of age, and that many of the staff at Coventry attend other medical men at their own expense, owing to their dissatisfaction with the medical officer's treatment; and whether, in view of his advanced age, steps will be taken to appoint another medical officer.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) I am having inquiry made, and will communicate the result to the hon. Member.

Dudley and Birmingham Post Office Scale of Wages.

MR. STAVELEY-HILL (Staffordshire, Kingswinford): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that the employees in the post office at Dudley receive 12s. a week less than those employed at Birmingham, and that the employees at Dudley are compelled to pass an examination in telegraphy and postal work, which test is not required of those employed at Birmingham; and whether he will state the reason for the difference in remuneration.

MR. STAVELEY-HILL: To ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that there are officers in the Dudley post office with thirty years service who are receiving 44s. per week, while those similarly employed at Birmingham, with a less amount of service, are receiving 56s. per week; and whether he can state the reason for this difference.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) I will answer the two Questions together. Under the recommendation of the Select Committee on Post Office Servants the new classification of towns in respect of scales of pay is to be based primarily on the volume of work modified where necessary by the cost of living. The unit of work at Birmingham is 7,400, which places it in Class 1. The index number of the cost of living at Birmingham, as ascertained by the Board of Trade, is 96. The unit of work at Dudley is only 168, and the index number of the cost of living 90, the average being 100. Sorting clerks and telegraphists at all provincial offices are liable to be employed on sorting or telegraph work as the exigencies of the service may require; but at the large offices, though the work is more trying, the conditions are nearly always such that officers are, in practice, employed exclusively on sorting or telegraph duties, as the case may be, and it is not, therefore, necessary to train them all fully on both classes of work.

Postal Officers and Territorial Force Camps.

MR. CLAUDE HAY (Shoreditch, Hoxton): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he can state whether postal servants who are members of the Territorial Forces will have leave of absence from official duties to attend camp; if they will receive their Civil Service pay during these periods; and whether he can state the regulations issued by the Post Office dealing with this subject.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) The regulations authorised by the Treasury provide for the grant of special leave up to a maximum of fifteen days in such cases. The Treasury Regulations as regards pay will be published immediately.

Dundee Telegraphists' Wages.

MR. WILKIE (Dundee): To ask the Postmaster-General whether the maximum wages of male telegraphists at Dundee, as a result of the departmental interpretation of the Hobhouse award, remains at the figure fixed in 1890; whether the maximum at Edinburgh is 4s. per week higher than at Dundee; whether the recent Board of Trade Returns show that Dundee is the city in Scotland in which the cost of living for the working classes is highest; and whether he will investigate the position of affairs at Dundee.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) In 1890 there were two classes of sorting clerks and telegraphists at Dundee. The first-class had a maximum of 50s., and the second-class a maximum of 40s. The classification of Dundee has been determined on the lines recommended by the the Select Committee on Post Office Servants, that is to say, primarily on volume of work modified where necessary by cost of living. The volume of work at Dundee is represented by about 1,120 units which places it in Class II., the range of which is from 800 to 1,700 units, and as the cost of living is not exceptionally high, it remains in Class II. On the same principle Edinburgh with about 4,780 units of work, and with the cost of living practically the same as in Dundee, remains in Class I.

Naturalisation Fees.

MR. BYLES (Salford, N.): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether, having regard to the expectations held out by the Prime Minister to an important deputation several months ago, he is yet able to promise a reduction of the fee charged for naturalisation in this country, so that it may conform more nearly to the smaller fees charged in foreign countries.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) The question has been very fully and carefully considered, and it has been decided not to make any reduction in the fee.

Tipton Death Inquiry.

MR. T. F. RICHARDS (Wolverhampton, W.): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether his attention has been called to the death of a man named David Pearson, at Tipton, in Staffordshire, upon whose body an inquest was held and a verdict returned of death from natural causes, accelerated by excessive drinking and exposure; whether he is aware that it is alleged that a noxious drug had been given this man; whether, under the circumstances, the authorities had taken the necessary steps to elicit the true cause of this man's death; and whether he intends to take any steps towards making further inquiries into this case.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) I have no information as to this case save that contained in the newspaper report which the hon. Member has kindly sent me, but I am making inquiries and will communicate the result to him.

Children in Public-Houses.

MR. FIENNES (Oxfordshire, Banbury): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether, in view of the widespread interest taken in the question of women taking infants and young children to public-houses, he will circulate to all Members the Home Office Report on this subject [Cd. 3813].

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) The Paper in question has been laid upon the Table, and has been dealt with in accordance with the usual rule as to the distribution of Command Papers. Copies can be obtained by any Member interested on application at the Vote office.

Religious Instruction in Training Colleges.

LORD R. CECIL (Marylebone, E.): To ask the President of the Board of Education, in how many, and which of the training colleges no religious instruction is given; and how many students are provided for at such colleges.

(*Answered by Mr. McKenna.*) The Board have not hitherto made inquiries as to the religious instruction given in training colleges, and I regret, therefore, that my information is confined to the colleges provided by the London County Council, to which I referred in my answer to the noble Lord on the 20th March.

Egyptian Administration.

MR. KETTLE (Tyrone, E.): To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, whether, according to the present political arrangements in Egypt, it is within the competence of the Khedive to grant a constitution or representative legislature to the people of Egypt.

(*Answered by Secretary Sir Edward Grey.*) Under present conditions, it would be necessary that if any step of the nature referred to were taken, it should be only in consultation with His Majesty's Government.

Mandi Chiefship.

MR. MICKLEM (Hertfordshire, Watford): To ask the Secretary of State for India, whether there is any record of the grounds upon which the memorial of Raja Dusht Nikandan Sen, Chief of Sukeh State, Punjaub, presented in 1904, and praying that the Raja's claims to the chiefship of Mandi might be inquired into and considered, was rejected by the then Secretary of State for India; and if so, whether he will state the reasons for such rejection, and whether the Raja was informed why he was not accorded a hearing.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Morley.*) The proceedings of the Secretary of State in Council, which resulted in the rejection of the memorial referred to, are on record. The reason for the rejection of the memorial was that it established no ground for interfering with the orders passed by the Government of India in 1897, recognising the adoption, by the late chief, of a son who is the present chief. The memorialist was duly informed that the Secretary of State, after fully considering all the circumstances of the cases, saw no reason for interfering with the orders of 1897.

Select Committee on East India Finance.

SIR H. COTTON (Nottingham, E.): To ask the Secretary of State for India, if he is aware that on page 909 of the Third Report of the Select Committee on East India Finance, ordered by this House to be printed on 28th July, 1873, a table is given showing the average effective strength of the European army in India from the year 1862-3 to the year 1871-2; that in that table the following totals for the years specified are given: 1862-3, 69,732; 1863-4, 67,712; 1867-8, 55,237; 1868-9, 55,756; 1870-1, 56,694; 1871-2, 58,437; that the figures now given for the same years are as follows: 1862, 73,174; 1863, 76,085; 1867, 65,467; 1868, 61,897; 1870, 56,954; 1871, 58,368; and will he state the reason for these discrepancies.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Morley.*) I do not know how the figures printed in 1873 were arrived at, but they appear to be averages for several months of each year, with the omission of commissioned officers. The figures given by me on the 26th March included commissioned officers, as requested by the hon. Member, and, as I then stated, represented the established and not the actual strength.

Defence of India.

SIR H. COTTON: To ask the Secretary of State for India, if he will state in what year the Report of the Royal Commission which sat shortly after the Mutiny to consider the question of the forces necessary for the protection of India, and advised that 80,000 British troops were required, was presented to this House; and what is the reference number of the Command Paper in which that Report was published.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Morley.*) The Report was presented in 1859. The reference number of the Command Paper is Cd. 2515.

British Garrison in India.

SIR H. COTTON: To ask the Secretary of State for India, whether he is aware that in answer to a question put on 13th March, 1906, by the hon. Member for North Camberwell the following figures were given by the Secretary of State for War of the total strength of the British forces serving in India in the years specified: January 1897, 76,995; January 1900, 66,581; January 1901, 63,623; January 1902, 63,958; January 1903, 75,740; October 1903, 76,380; October 1904, 76,938; October 1905, 78,061; and that the figures now given for the same years are as follows: 1897–8, 76,376; 1900–1, 65,581; 1901–2, 62,999; 1902–3, 59,497; 1903–4, 74,709; 1904–5, 74,872; 1905–6, 77,268; and will he state the reason for these discrepancies.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Morley.*) The figures given by me on the 26th of March last were then stated to be for the 1st of April in each year. The reason of the discrepancy between those figures and those which the Secretary of State for War gave two years ago for January and October, is to be found in the fact that the numbers vary at different times of the year according to the relief movements of troops between India and this country.

Women Clerks at the Post Office.

Mr. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he will state the respective numbers of women clerks from each branch of the Post Office in London whose names are noted as desiring transfer to Dublin; and seeing that junior members of such clerks, to the exclusion of their seniors, are about to be transferred to Dublin, will he say whether all future transfers will be regulated according to seniority and equality of efficiency.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) The total number of women clerks who have applied for transfer to Dublin is fifty-eight, of whom eighteen are employed in the Accountant-General's Department, twenty-nine in the Savings Bank, and eleven in the Money Order Department. Priority of application is the governing factor in the case of transfers.

Mr. FIELD: To ask the Postmaster-General whether, seeing that a number of Savings Bank women clerks were asked by the Savings Bank authorities, either privately or officially, sometime before the present Government came into office, if they would serve in Dublin, that the percentages of Irish deposits and withdrawals made through British deposit books and vice versa, as worked out by the Savings Bank, either privately or officially, show only one per cent. approximately on the totals, that, apart from the enormous inconvenience to Irish depositors, Ireland loses £30,000 per annum by having the Irish Savings Bank accounts kept in London, that 99 per cènt. of the manufactured stuff used in the Post Office in Ireland is not manufactured in Ireland, that clerical work can be as efficiently, and, having regard to the cost of housing accommodation, more economically performed in Dublin than in London, and that it would be more in conformity with Irish ideas if the Irish Savings Bank accounts were kept in Dublin, he will further consider the advisability of transferring the work of keeping these accounts from London to Dublin.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) I am afraid I have nothing to add to the replies I gave my hon. friend on the subject last session.

Permanent Assistant Secretary to the Treasury.

Mr. FIELD: To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he will explain, in reference to the promotion of Mr. Blain over Mr. Crowly as Permanent Assistant Secretary to the Treasury, who was the official responsible for this selection, and what proof did he put forward as to Mr. Blain being more meritorious than Mr. Crowly for the superior appointment.

(*Answered by Mr. Runciman.*) This appointment was made by the Board of Treasury.

The Assistant Comptroller and Auditor.

Mr. FIELD: To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he will state the number of months sick leave the late Mr. Gleadowe had during the year immediately preceding his appointment as assistant comptroller and auditor; for what length of time did he occupy the latter position, and what sick leave did he have during this period; and whether, contrary to the Exchequer and Audit Department Act, he was selected for the position of assistant comptroller and auditor by the permanent officials of the Treasury.

(*Answered by Mr. Runciman.*) Mr. Gleadowe has been dead more than four years, and in these circumstances, I am not prepared to make inquiries as to the amount of his sick leave. His appointment was made in accordance with the provisions of the Exchequer and Audit Department Act.

Prevention of Railway Accidents.

MR. ELLIS (Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe): To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether any special appointments of persons have been made under Section 15 of The Railway Employment (Prevention of Accidents) Act, 1900; and whether any inquiries have been held and experiments have been made under the same section.

(*Answered by Mr. Kearley.*) The two assistant inspecting officers of railways, who have conducted practically all the inspections made under the Act of 1900, were added to the staff of the department in January 1901. An additional sub-inspecting officer was also appointed in March 1904. In addition to the inquiries which are continually being held, where necessary, by these officers into the causes of accidents to railway servants, and to numerous inspections under Section 13 of the Act, special investigation has been made in some cases where a railway company has objected to a rule proposed by the Board under the Act for reasons connected with special circumstances on a railway. The Railway Employment Safety Appliances Committee, who were appointed in April 1906, were also directed, *inter alia*, to make with the co-operation of the railway companies such experiments as they deemed expedient. From the Committee's Reports it appears that they have made experiments with either-side brakes for waggons, and have also examined many inventions and appliances.

Railway Waggon Couplings.

MR. ELLIS: To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether any committee has been appointed by him to consider and report upon the matter of automatic couplings of railway waggons, of whom it is composed, has such committee carried out any experiments, has it reported; and, if so, what is the nature of such report, and, if not, how soon is it likely to report.

(*Answered by Mr. Kearley.*) The Railway Safety Appliances Committee (consisting of Colonel Yorke, the hon. Member for Derby, and Mr. Turnbull) have considered, among other matters, the question of automatic couplings. They reported, after very full consideration, that it appeared to be impracticable to fit such appliances to existing waggon stock, and that consequently any extensive tests of automatic couplers under present conditions would be of no value.

Prevention of Railway Accidents—Rules.

MR. ELLIS: To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether rules have been made, and are now in force, with respect to all the twelve subjects mentioned in the schedule to The Railway Employment (Prevention of Accidents) Act, 1900; if not, which of the subjects are still without rules, and at what stage is the action necessary to make or complete the rules respecting it or them; whether any rules have been made under Section 1, Sub-section (2), of the Act, and, if so, what is their nature; whether any rules have been made under Section 1, Sub-section (3), of the Act, and, in that case, what is their nature; and whether any specific order has been made under Section 8 of the Act, and, if so, what is its nature.

(*Answered by Mr. Kearley.*) Rules are now in force with regard to nine of the twelve subjects scheduled to the Act of 1900, and a proposed rule was published last August with regard to a further subject, brake levers on both sides of waggons, and has now been modified in view of certain objections received thereto. It has not yet been thought necessary to make rules with regard to No. 7, position of offices, etc., or No. 8, marking of fouling points, as such matters can be more conveniently dealt with, should occasion arise, than by general rule under Section 1 (1). No rules have been made under Section 1 (2) and (3) of the Act, nor have any specific orders under Section 8 been found necessary.

Irish Provident Assurance Company.

MR. N. J. MURPHY (Kilkenny, S.): To ask the President of the Board of Trade if his attention, or the attention of the Law Officers of the Crown, has been drawn to the position of affairs of the Irish Provident Assurance Company, Limited, and to the fact that thousands of pounds of the policy-holders' money have been spent by the directors in various schemes with the object of making profits for themselves; and also that the funds of the company are not properly safeguarded in the interests of the policy-holders, which makes it possible for the directors to use the funds of the company for their own personal purposes, without any power of control being accorded to the members of the company; and will the Government consider the desirability of having an investigation made into the working of the Irish Provident Assurance Company, Limited, to follow on the investigations which were conducted by the Law Officers of the Crown, but were discontinued in consequence of the proposed amalgamation of the Irish Provident with the National Standard Corporation, Limited, and which amalgamation was not carried out.

(*Answered by Mr. Kearley.*) The attention of the Board of Trade has been called from time to time to the affairs of the Irish Provident Assurance Company, Limited, but I am not aware of the circumstances referred to by the hon. Member. As stated in the Answers given on the 23rd April last to the hon. Member for West Kerry, and on the 22nd August last to the hon. Member for Limerick, the only power vested in the Board of Trade is that, under Sections 56 and 57 of the The Companies Act, 1862, of appointing an inspector upon the application of members holding not less than one-fifth of the share capital of the company for the time being issued. I may remind the hon. Member that by the Companies Act of last year, which will come into operation on the 1st July next, the proportion of members required for the purposes of an application will be reduced from one-fifth to one-tenth.

Peterborough Railway Station.

Lord J. JOICEY-CECIL (Lincolnshire, Stamford): To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will use his influence with the directors of the Great Northern Railway Company in order to induce them to construct at Peterborough, with as little delay as possible, a subway for luggage and passengers, and by so doing reduce the constant risk to life and limb to which their servants are exposed by having to carry luggage, etc., over the permanent way.

(*Answered by Mr. Kearley.*) The Board of Trade communicated with the railway company in this matter on receiving notice of the noble Lord's Question, and are informed that there is already a bridge for passengers at Peterborough station, and that the company do not consider a subway for luggage necessary.

Ordnance Survey Maps.

Mr. FETHERSTONHAUGH (Fermanagh, N.): To ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether the Ordnance Survey maps were formerly printed in Ireland from copper-plates, and are they at present printed in England from zinc-plates; are maps printed from zinc-plates inferior to copper-plate maps; and will he have the recent Survey maps, for example, the six inch maps for county Leitrim, compared by an expert with the maps of the former Survey, and ask for his report whether the old standard of excellence, either in printing or paper, is maintained in the new Survey.

(*Answered by Sir Edward Strachey.*) The maps on a scale of six-inch to a mile were formerly engraved on copper, but they have been printed by means of zinc-plates for very many years past both in England and Ireland. The processes adopted give a good clear result, they are far cheaper and more rapid than engraving, and the maps can, by this means, be placed in the hands of the public within a reasonable time of the survey or revision. In the case of the county of Leitrim, the maps published in 1882–6 were drawn on stone as an experiment. Various causes contributed to the deterioration of the stones, and within the last few years it has been found necessary to reproduce by helio-zincography twenty-two out of thirty-eight sheets comprising the county, so as to bring them up to the standard of other six-inch maps. The county of Leitrim is now being re-surveyed on the twenty-five-inch scale, and within the next few years existing maps will be superseded. There is no necessity to resort to expert advice outside the Ordnance Survey in the matter.

Herefordshire Hill-Climbing Contests.

Mr. CATHCART WASON (Orkney and Shetland): To ask the President of the Local Government Board, whether his attention has been directed to the hill-climbing contests which the Herefordshire Automobile Club propose to hold on Cockshut Hill; whether, as promised by him on the 27th May, 1907 in this House, he communicated with the Secretary of State for the Home Department on the subject of such contests; and whether, having regard to his own opinion expressed on the same date, he will consider the advisability of now taking steps either to prohibit such contests on public roads altogether, or at least to confine them to such times and places as will ensure the public safety.

(*Answered by Mr. John Burns.*) My attention has not been called to the first matter referred to in the Question. The Answer as regards the second part of it is in the affirmative. As I pointed out, in replying to my hon. friend's Question of the 27th May last, the administration of the law relating to the use of the highways by motor cars is practically in the hands of the local police, and I am not myself in a position to take action in cases of this kind.

Imported Kidneys.

MR. COURTHOPE (Sussex, Rye): To ask the President of the Local Government Board whether a quantity of preserved kidneys imported from America have been seized in the City of London as unfit for human food; what quantity of boric acid or other preservative they contained, and what quantity of such preservative per gallon and per pound is considered deleterious to health; and when the promised regulations dealing with the importation and sale of unsound food will be issued.

(*Answered by Mr. John Burns.*) The answer, as regards the first point in the Question, is in the affirmative. Two samples were submitted to the public analyst. In the first case he reported that the fluid in which the kidneys were preserved and the kidneys themselves each contained 2·1 per cent. of boric acid, which was equivalent to 1,470 grains per gallon of the fluid, and 147 grains per pound of the kidneys, respectively. In the other case the analyst's report showed that the kidneys contained 1.46 per cent. of boric acid (equivalent to 102·2 grains per pound), whilst the fluid contained 1.7 per cent. of boric acid (equal to 1,190 grains per gallon). The answer, as regards the third point, depends on a number of considerations which cannot conveniently be discussed in reply to a Question. I may, however, say that the presence in imported kidneys of proportions of boric acid so large as those given above is decidedly objectionable from the point of view of public health, and I am advised that it is wholly unnecessary. I propose to give special attention to imported preserved kidneys in the regulations referred to in the last part of the Question. These regulations are in an advanced state of preparation.

Scottish Slaughter-houses.

MR. WATT (Glasgow, College): To ask the Secretary for Scotland if he is aware that it is the practice of some local authorities in Scotland to let the burgh slaughter-house to yearly tenants, who reimburse themselves by the collection of dues from butchers for the use of the slaughter-house, and that these tenants perform the duty of meat inspectors; and will he say what control the local authorities have over the yearly tenants of the burgh slaughter-houses to insure the proper discharge of their duties as official meat inspectors, and do the local authorities demand that these tenants should have the qualifications for meat inspectors specified under Recommendations, Meat—B, by the Royal Commission on Tuberculosis, 1898.

(*Answered by Mr. Sinclair.*) I am aware that in several burghs the slaughter-house is let to a local butcher who, in some instances, reimburses himself by the collection of dues; that in one or two instances known to the Local Government Board the tenants are understood to report diseased or unsound carcases to the sanitary officials; but that, in the majority of burghs with public slaughter-houses, the sanitary inspector and veterinary surgeon visit daily or at such other intervals as may be necessary for effective supervision. So far as I am aware the local authorities do not demand that the tenants of their slaughter-houses shall possess the qualifications specified by the Royal Commission on Tuberculosis.

Education Grants.

MR. NIELD (Middlesex, Ealing): To ask the President of the Board of Education whether the contemplated increased grants to be made under the Education Bill will involve an additional charge on the Exchequer of £1,400,000, apart from and independently of the proposed increase in the scale of grants to be made to contracted-out schools; and whether any estimate has been formed by the Department as to what the increase in these last-named grants is likely to amount to.

(*Answered by Mr. McKenna.*) No, Sir. The estimate of £1,400,000 represents the total increase in the Exchequer grants in aid of elementary education under the Bill. No estimate of the amount of grant payable to voluntary schools can be formed until the approximate number of children attending those schools is known; but, as the average rate of grant per child throughout the country will amount to 47s., the total cost to the Exchequer will not be materially affected by the number of voluntary schools or of children attending them.

Privately-Owned Voluntary Schools.

MR. NIELD: To ask the President of the Board of Education whether the Department would sanction, as within Clause 3, Sub-section 3, of the Education Bill, an arrangement whereby, as a condition of the transfer of a privately-owned voluntary elementary school, a local education authority gave an undertaking to the owner of the school that the school-house should be placed at the disposal of such private owner on school-day evenings and during holidays.

(*Answered by Mr. McKenna.*) The arrangement referred to in the Question would not be possible as a condition of transfer under Clause 3 (3).

Sales of Liquors in Public-houses and Hotels.

SIR HENRY KIMBER (Wandsworth): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer what proportion does the quantity and value of excisable liquor sold through the channel of public-houses and hotels bear to the whole amount distributed or consumed throughout England and Wales respectively.

(*Answered by Mr. Asquith.*) No statistics are available.

The Budget.

MR. HORNIMAN (Chelsea): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he can yet fix the date on which he will introduce the Budget.

(*Answered by Mr. Asquith.*) I am not yet able to fix a definite day.

Licensing Reduction Period.

MR. BARNARD (Kidderminster): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether, in reference to Sub-clause (1) of Clause 1 of the Licensing Bill, relating to the reduction period of fourteen years, such reduction period or time limit, in view of the provisions of Clause 3, was based upon any statistical or actuarial data; whether such data are available to Members of the House or general public, and where; and, if not, whether he will lay a Paper containing the information referred to.

(*Answered by Mr. Asquith.*) The reduction period of fourteen years was adopted as being of a reasonable length, regard being had to all the circumstances of the case, many of which are not of such a character that they could be given any precise mathematical expression. It is not founded upon any statistical or actuarial data.

Hill Estate, Doneraile, County Cork.

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Estates Commissioners are aware that the tenants on the Hill, otherwise Del Re, estate, Kilcoleman, Doneraile, county Cork, signed the purchase agreements in May, 1906, and, consented to pay interest at 4 per cent. on the purchase money on the understanding that the transaction would be completed within six or twelve months, whereas it is not yet completed; and whether, in view of the burdensome nature of the interest, the Commissioners will take steps either to complete the sale immediately or to reduce the interest to the normal rate of 3½ per cent.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The agreements for the sale in this case were lodged with the Estate Commissioners in August 1906, and some considerable time must elapse before the estate reaches its turn to be dealt with. The rate of interest in lieu of rent is a matter of arrangement between the parties, and the Commissioners are bound by statute to collect the interest mentioned in the purchase agreement. The Commissioners have no power to reduce the rate of interest, and they do not consider that they would be justified in taking the case out of its proper turn.

Whalley Estate Evicted Tenant.

Mr. MURNAGHAN (Tyrone, Mid.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Estates Commissioners have yet satisfied themselves as to the claim of Robert Patterson for reinstatement in his former holding on the Whalley estate in the townland of Striff, near Mountfield, county Tyrone; and, if so, can he state their decision.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The Estates Commissioners regard Robert Patterson as a suitable person to receive a holding, and the case has been referred to an inspector with a view to providing him with one if possible.

Irish School Accommodation.

Mr. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can explain what is meant by the Commissioners of National Education by the expression adequate accommodation of a satisfactory kind in Rule 127b; and if he is aware that in many schools, without any addition to the outoffices, the junior boys are packed into the girls' schools; and whether, in view of this fact, he will have the rule referred to carried out in every school.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The Commissioners of National Education inform me that in applying Rule 127b they have not considered it necessary to define the character of the accommodation which should be afforded in a girls' school, further than that it should be adequate and satisfactory. Before enforcing the rule in any case, the Commissioners obtain their inspector's report upon all the circumstances, and having regard to the conditions of both the boys' and girls' schools, they then determine which of these schools should be attended by the infant boys. Objections to the application of the rule on sanitary or other grounds are fully considered, and the enrolment of infant boys in girls' schools is not insisted upon in all cases.

Rockhill Untenanted Lands.

Mr. O'SHAUGHNESSY (Limerick, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can say whether the Estates Commissioners have purchased the untenanted lands of Stylepark, Rockhill, in the county of Limerick, the property of Mr. F. H. Wise; if so, will they take steps to have them divided amongst the small holders and labourers in the district; and whether, in the event of their not having purchased the lands, will they take steps to do so.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The Estates Commissioners have had the lands in question inspected, and the owner has instituted formal proceedings for the sale of these lands to the Commissioners, who will deal with the matter with as little delay as possible.

Bruree Evicted Farms.

Mr. O'SHAUGHNESSY: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he can say who is the person in occupation of the holding from which the Dunworth family was evicted at Garryfine, Bruree, in the county of Limerick; what is the date and nature of the alleged tenancy; and have the Estates Commissioners made any inquiry as to whether the alleged tenant is willing to give up the place to the Dunworth's, and, if so, with what result.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The Estates Commissioners understand that the farm formerly held by the Dunworth family is now in the possession of Messrs R. and C. Saunders. The Commissioners consider Robert and Jeremiah Dunworth to be suitable persons to receive holdings if such can be provided for them. The file of papers referring to the case is at present in the hands of an inspector for the purposes of an inquiry, and the Commissioners are therefore unable to give the other details asked for in the Question.

Rockhill Untenanted Land.

Mr. O'SHAUGHNESSY: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can say what steps the Estates Commissioners have taken to purchase the untenanted lands at Ballyclough, Rockhill, in the county of Limerick, the property of Mr. Patrick Carroll, with the view to have them parcelled out into small holdings amongst the labourers and for the purpose of enlarging the small holdings there.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The Estates Commissioners are unable to identify the lands referred to in the Question, but if the hon. Member will furnish them with the name and address of the agent they will make inquiries in the matter.

Knockaderry Evicted Tenant.

MR. O'SHAUGHNESSY: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can say why the Estates Commissioners are not reinstating Mrs. Scanlan, of Knockaderry, in the county of Limerick, in the holding from which herself and her husband, since deceased, were evicted at Kilgulban and which is in the landlord's hands; and whether the Estates Commissioners will put the Evicted Tenants Act into force in this case.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The Estates Commissioners consider Mrs. Scanlan to be a suitable person to work a holding, and they have referred her case to an inspector with the object of providing her with a farm if possible.

Blake Estate, Mayo.

MR. JOHN O'DONNELL (Mayo, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether negotiations have been entered into by the Congested Districts Board for the purchase of the Blake estate, in the Claremorris union, county Mayo; is he aware that the need exists for the improvement of the condition of the tenants on this estate owing to the smallness of their holdings, the inferior quality of the land, and the loss sustained yearly in consequence of the harvest flooding of an adjoining river; that these negotiations appear to have been broken off by the Board, although the landlord and tenants have agreed to leave the matter in their hands; and, if so, why; and when will they reopen them with a view to completing a sale that would bring immediate relief to a body of impoverished tenantry.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The estate in question has been offered for sale to the Congested Districts Board, but the Board have been obliged to suspend the negotiations for the purchase of this and other tenanted estates, the reason being that the funds of the Board are at present insufficient for the execution of the necessary improvement works. For a full statement of the case I would refer the hon. Member to my Answer to the Question of the hon. Member for East Mayo on 4th March last. The Board cannot at present say when it will be possible to resume negotiations for purchase.

Officers of Disbanded Militia Battalions.

SIR T. GLEN-COATS (Renfrewshire, W.): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether officers of Militia battalions ordered to be disbanded who have elected to transfer to other units may be transferred now and receive, after the next training of their new unit, the uniform allowance of £40 alluded to in special Army Order of 23rd December last.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) These officers cannot be transferred at present. They must be attached to another unit until it is converted into a reserve battalion at the end of the annual training of 1908, when they will be posted to it and receive the actual expenses involved by the change of uniform not exceeding £40.

Retired Volunteers Officers.

MR. LAMONT (Buteshire): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether retired officers of Volunteers, who retain their rank and uniform, will be given the same privilege in the Territorial Army.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) In accordance with paragraph 60 of Part I. of the special Army Order of the 18th March (Scheme for the Transfer, etc.) an officer of the Territorial Force resigning with not less than fifteen years commissioned service will, on the recommendation of his commanding officer, be eligible to retain his rank and wear the prescribed uniform.

Volunteer Seniority.

MR. SEAVERNS (Lambeth, Brixton): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether a Volunteer, being a member of a battalion which has been either disbanded or amalgamated under the new scheme, may join a regiment other than the one with which his old corps has been amalgamated, and retain his rank and seniority, should the commanding officer of such regiment be prepared to accept him on those terms.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The regulations permitting such Volunteers to join other units and retain their rank on transfer are set forth in paragraphs 80 and 81, Part I., of the Special Army Order of 18th March (Scheme for the transfer, etc.). The question of seniority is left to the commanding officer and association to decide. In case of a difference of opinion the officer commanding the brigade will decide.

Volunteer Long Service Medal.

Mr. SEAVERNS: To ask the Secretary of State for War whether a Volunteer or non-commissioned officer with nineteen years and six months service, who may be unable to accept service in the Territorial Force, will be allowed to attach himself to a Territorial regiment for six months only and fulfil the requirements of the Volunteer regulations, and thereby qualify for and receive the long service medal; and whether the Volunteer so attached for six months to a Territorial regiment will be allowed to retain his present rank of non-commissioned officer, and at the end of the period retire with all the privileges now in force according to his rank.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The reply to the Question is in the negative. Special consideration, will, however, be given to Volunteers unable to join the Territorial Force, and instruction will shortly be issued in regard to the grant of the long service medal and any privileges on retirement.

Case of John Killeen, Royal Munster Fusiliers.

Mr. JOYCE (Limerick): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether his attention has been called to the case of John Killeen, reserve man, No. 4134, late Royal Munster Fusiliers, whose reserve pay was stopped for 1907, owing to his failing to comply with regulations as to his putting in one day's firing in each year; is he aware that this man's excuse is that, through lack of employment at home, he had to go to Glasgow and Liverpool to look for work and so missed his one day's musketry drill, and that he is willing to make up for this by doing one more day's drill as may be ordered; and whether under those circumstances, he will now receive the pay that was stopped from him.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) Nothing is known of this case in the War Office. The general officer commanding-in-Chief concerned will be asked to report.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

British Material for Admiralty Contracts.

Mr. MITCHELL-THOMSON (Lanarkshire, N.W.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he will consider the desirability of asking contractors, when tendring for large contracts for Admiralty works, to state whether they propose to employ British or Foreign granite or cement.

The SECRETARY to the ADMIRALTY (Mr. Edmund Robertson, Dundee): I think the hon. Member's suggestion may quite reasonably be included in the category of questions which, in debate on the 10th March, I undertook to consider in connection with the contract for Rosyth.

Cost of British and Foreign Granite for Admiralty Works.

Mr. MITCHELL-THOMSON: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty, whether he is now in a position to give information with regard to the relative cost of British and Foreign granite, delivered at Portsmouth, Haulbowline, and Rosyth, respectively.

Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON: This Question should be addressed to the Board of Trade.

Speed of British Torpedoes.

Captain FABER (Hampshire, Andover): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether the torpedoes used in the British Navy are from eight to ten knots slower than those used by foreign fleets; whether the Bliss-Leavitt apparatus would remedy this defect; whether, owing to this slowness, the bow tube cannot be installed in our destroyers or fast craft for fear of the vessel overrunning the torpedo; and whether the use of the bow tube would enable the destroyer to attack with least risk to herself and most effect on the enemy.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: The Answers to all four of the hon. and gallant Member's Questions are in the negative.

CAPTAIN FABER: Is it not the fact that the Japanese suffered severely at Port Arthur through not having at that time the bow tubes?

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: That is a question of which I think I ought to have notice.

Stonemasons' Hours on Dockyard Works.

MR. FELL (Great Yarmouth): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty if the hours worked in the construction of the dockyards at Keyham and Haulbowline by the stonemasons are 10 per day and the wages paid 6d. per hour; and if these are the trade union rates of wages in the respective districts.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: The stonemasons employed by the contractor at Haulbowline work fifty-three and a half hours weekly — six hours on Saturdays, and nine and a half other days. Their weekly wage is 36s., which equals 8d. per hour, the current rate for Queenstown. The only stonemasons employed by contractors at Keyham are on piecework. The current rate for stonemasons in the Devonport district is 8d. per hour.

MR. FELL: And are not the wages paid in Norway at the rate of 6d. an hour as against 8d. in Cornwall?

[No Answer was returned.]

MR. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.): Can the right hon. Gentleman give us the name of the Norwegian firm who supply this granite?

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: The only firm we deal with is an English firm.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Will the right hon. Gentleman get the name of the Norwegian firm from which the patriotic British firm get their granite?

MR. WEDGWOOD (Newcastle-under-Lyme): Will the right hon. Gentleman see that all stones for Government dockyards are bought in the cheapest markets?

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): Has the right hon. Gentleman never heard of the Donegal quarries?

[No Answer was returned.]

Artillery Militia Staff.

MAJOR ANSTRUTHER-GRAY (St. Andrews Burghs): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he can now inform the House what proportion of the staff of the Artillery Militia are to be abolished in the different ranks under the new *regime.*

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. HALDANE, Haddington): There will be a total decrease in the staff of the Artillery Militia of thirty sergeant-majors, 422 staff sergeants and sergeants, 166 other ranks. These must either be absorbed in the Regular Garrison Artillery, or, if suitable, used as permanent staff in the Territorial Artillery. Further it is possible that some of them may be utilised as permanent staff for the Reserve Field Artillery.

Irish Militia.

CAPTAIN CRAIG (Down, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War how many towns in Ireland are affected by the change of the local Militia depot under the new Territorial Army Act; and can he give details of the central depots to which Militia recruits are in future to be moved, and the old depots which they are to be compelled to leave.

MR. HALDANE: All the recruits for the Special Reserve will drill on enlistment at the depots, but if accommodation proves insufficient it may be necessary to use some of the old Militia barracks at detached stations. The central depots are the depots of the regimental districts. By reference to the Army List the hon. and gallant Member will therefore be readily able to obtain the detailed information he desires. It may be added that several Militia units did not drill recruits at their detached headquarters.

CAPTAIN CRAIG: Is it the fact that fourteen towns will be affected by the change?

MR. HALDANE: Quite probably; I cannot say.

Irish Militia and Yeomanry Officers.

CAPTAIN CRAIG: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he can state exactly the *status* of Irish Militia and Yeomanry officers under the new Territorial Army scheme; how far such scheme extends to Ireland; whether he could lay upon the Table a short statement of the conditions under which officers and men joining the Militia and Yeomanry in future will be recruited; and whether existing officers and new ones joining are liable for compulsory service abroad in time of war.

MR. HALDANE: There is no Territorial Force in Ireland. The conditions under which officers and men of the Irish Militia may join the Special Reserve are shown in detail in Special Army Order of 23rd September, 1907. A similar order as regards the Irish Yeomanry will shortly be issued. Both officers and men of the Irish Militia who join the Special Reserve at the present time or officers and men who do so in the future will join with a liability to serve abroad in the event of war. A similar condition will be imposed upon the Irish Yeomanry.

CAPTAIN CRAIG asked what course was open to the officers of the Irish Militia.

MR. HALDANE said they could join the Special Reserve.

CAPTAIN CRAIG: But if they do not want to join the Special Reserve?

MR. HALDANE: The Militia as such ceases to exist, and the Special Reserve takes its place.

Bushmills Postmaster and Pension Warrant.

CAPTAIN CRAIG: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if his attention has been called to the action taken by the postmaster, Mr. Alexander Park, at Bushmills in respect of the pension warrant of Mr. Hugh M'Fall, by refusing as postmaster to deliver the pension warrant to Mr. M'Fall unless he assented to the deduction by the postmaster of a debt of 17s. due to him in his private capacity as a draper; if the postmaster was justified by the rules of the department in so acting; and, if not, what steps will be taken to secure that pensions in Bushmills and elsewhere will reach those entitled without illegal deductions.

THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON, Tower Hamlets, Poplar): My right hon. friend has asked me to reply to this Question. I am making inquiry in the matter, and will communicate the result to the hon. Member.

Cordite.

MR. CLAUDE HAY (Shoreditch, Hoxton): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War what were the terms of reference to the conference of experts who recently inquired into questions affecting the durability and safety of cordite.

MR. HALDANE: It is not in the interests of the public service to state at present the terms of reference to the Conference held under the presidency of Lord Rayleigh.

MR. CLAUDE HAY: Will the report be made public?

MR. HALDANE: I am not at all sure.

Case of Daniel Gallagher, late of the Inniskilling Fusiliers.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether his attention has been directed to the case of Daniel Gallagher, who served in the Inniskilling Fusiliers from 12th July, 1893, till his discharge on 10th April, 1905, his character being described on his discharge paper very good; whether he is aware that out of his total service of eleven years and nine months, Gallagher served ten years and six months continuously abroad, was on active service in India and South Africa, is the holder of two medals and six clasps, but on his discharge only received an allowance of 6d. a day by getting attached to the Army Reserve, and that this allowance must soon cease; and whether, having regard to the fact that Gallagher is in rapid consumption and has been discharged as incurable from the Ballyshannon Union Hospital, what steps, if any, will the authorities take to secure him from destitution for the residue of a life which is drawing to a close from hardships sustained in military service.

MR. HALDANE: Inquiry is being made into this case, and the hon. and learned Member will be duly informed of the result.

Instruction in Indian Vernacular Languages.

MR. REES (Montgomery Boroughs): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether he is prepared to suggest to the Indian Government that instruction in its schools, following the practice which has proved so successful in Japan, should be given, as far as possible, in the vernacular languages of different parts of the Indian Empire.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Mr. MORLEY, Montrose Burghs): It has always been the policy of the Indian Department of Education to adopt the vernacular languages as the medium of instruction in the primary schools, and to a large extent in the secondary schools. The Government of India are well acquainted with the methods in use in Japan, and I hardly think it is necessary for me to call their attention to the subject.

Indian Tea Exports.

MR. REES: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether any figures are available showing the export of tea from India by the Quetta-Nushki route; and whether he is aware that the export of indifferent tea from India by this route has prejudiced the development and the sale of Indian tea in Persia and Beluchistan.

MR. MORLEY: The reports on the Quetta-Nushki route do not give the figures of tea carried. The returns of trade by land between British India and foreign countries show exports of Indian tea to Persia, value £512 in 1904–5, £641 in 1905–6, £157 in 1906–7. I have seen a reference in the *Indian Trade Journal* to the inferior quality of the tea found in the bazaars in Seistan and Kain, but I have no other information.

MR. O'GRADY (Leeds, E.): Can the right hon. Gentleman account for this diminution?

MR. MORLEY: No, Sir; I am afraid I cannot.

Pensions of Indian Army Officers.

MR. SMEATON (Stirlingshire): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether Lord Kitchener, the Commander-in-Chief in India, recommended last year that the previous commissioned service, out of India, of officers of the Indian Army up to a period of five years be allowed to reckon as service towards Indian pension; whether this recommendation was supported by the Government of India; and whether it has been accepted by the Secretary of State.

MR. MORLEY: Proposals to the effect stated in the Question were made by the Government of India last year, subject to a proviso that the charges entailed should be borne by the Home Government. A decision has not yet been arrived at on these proposals.

Indian Whipping Act.

MR. O'GRADY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether his attention has been called to the fact that Sir Harvey Adamson, at a sitting of the Council of India, announced that the Amendment to the Whipping Act would reduce the number of stripes for juveniles and tend to limit the number in other cases of violence; and whether, having regard to the statement made in this House that juveniles should be exempt from whipping for political offences, he can now assure the House that at least in this particular the Act shall be amended in accordance with the pledge given.

MR. MORLEY: I see no inconsistency between the two statements quoted, and I have no reason to doubt that the Bill as it stands exempts juveniles from whipping for political offences; but if it does not, I can assure my hon. friend that the necessary Amendment will be made.

SIR H. COTTON (Nottingham, E.): When does the right hon. Gentleman expect to get a copy of the Bill—by the next mail?

MR. MORLEY: I cannot say when it will arrive.

Defence of the North West Frontier of India.

MR. LONSDALE (Armagh, Mid.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether the movable columns on the North West frontier of India are fully equipped with transport, commissariat, and medical services, and ready to march immediately in case of need.

MR. MORLEY: The movable columns on the North West frontier of India are all ready to march at a moment's notice. The staff and various units are detailed and schemes exist for the immediate mobilisation of the columns when required. The additional supplies, etc., necessary to enable them to keep the field are so located as to be obtainable at short notice.

Mails to Tristan da Cunha.

MAJOR ANSTRUTHER-GRAY: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether it is intended to send a mail in the course of this year to Tristan da Cunha, and when the last mail was sent.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. RUNCIMAN, Dewsbury; for Mr. CHURCHILL): I cannot say when the next mail will be despatched. The last mail left the Cape in February of last year. A ship left the Cape on 29th February last for Tristan and inquiry was made in January with regard to this ship, but the information was not received in time to despatch mails from this country.

MAJOR ANSTRUTHER-GRAY: Is the House to understand that the despatch of mails to and from this island is entirely guided by chance?

MR. RUNCIMAN: I believe the despatch is distinctly irregular.

Cingalese and Indian Railways.

MR. LONSDALE: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether imperial sanction has been solicited for a scheme of linking up the railway systems of Ceylon and India by means of a bridge over the Palk Straits *via* the islands of Manar and Ramswaram; and whether His Majesty's Government are favourable to this project.

MR. RUNCIMAN (for Mr. CHURCHILL): No, Sir.

Martial Law in Zululand.

MR. G. GREENWOOD (Peterborough): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies if he can state the number of natives arrested or detained in custody under martial law in Zululand and the northern territory of Natal since the 9th December last, the number of natives tried or still awaiting trial, the number convicted, and the number sentenced to imprisonment or fines; and if he can state the number of natives who have been flogged since that date under sentence of any magistrate or by order of any other person claiming to exercise the powers of martial law.

MR. RUNCIMAN (for Mr. CHURCHILL): Sir Duncan McKenzie reported that during his operations in Zululand five natives were tried and flogged. Two magistrates were deputed to administer martial law, one of whom tried no cases and the other tried twenty-six cases, punished five persons, and discharged a considerable number left in prison by Sir Duncan McKenzie. The Secretary of State for the Colonies has no information of any further cases, and the Governor has informed him that he came across little evidence of use of the powers conferred by martial law during his visit to the divisions of Zululand most affected by the operations of the Militia and police. No complaints were made to Sir M. Nathan by the Zulus of harsh treatment under martial law.

Csernova and Slovak Riots.

MR. WEDGWOOD: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he has obtained any report from any of our Consuls in Austro-Hungary as to the riots and massacre at Csernova, or as to the trials of and sentences passed on the Slovak rioters; and, if so, whether he will lay them before this House.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir EDWARD GREY, Northumberland, Berwick): The incident referred to has been fully reported in the Press, and the despatches on the subject which have been received from His Majesty's representatives at Vienna and Budapest do not add anything material to the information so published.

MR. WEDGWOOD: In view of the friendly relations that obtain between this country and the Magyar Government, could not the right hon. Gentleman call for some official report from the Magyar Government on this subject?

SIR EDWARD GREY: To call for official documents respecting internal affairs of another country is not calculated to conduce to friendly relations.

Irish Lace Frauds.

MR. BOLAND (Kerry, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether his attention has been called to the prosecution and fining of La Samaritaine, a French firm trading in Regent Street, London, for exposing and selling as Irish lace a French-made crochet blouse; whether he is aware that numbers of American and other visitors have made similar purchases in the belief that they were obtaining lace made in Ireland; and whether, with a view to putting on their guard American visitors to London and other places where this dishonest form of trading has been carried on, he will convey to the proper authorities in the United States a notification of the fact that such practices exist and of the damage thereby caused to an important Irish industry.

SIR EDWARD GREY: I am aware of the facts mentioned by the hon. Member; but so far as I can gather the representatives of the Irish lace industry are in a position to protect their own interests, and I do not see on what ground I could ask authorities in the United States to take action in the matter. I hope the publicity which has been given to the matter already will be beneficial.

MR. BOLAND: But cannot the right hon. gentleman utilise machinery at his disposal—the British Consuls in the United States—to circulate the information?

SIR EDWARD GREY: Yes, I am quite willing to communicate any information to the British Consuls; I thought the hon. Member referred to the United States Consuls.

Cruelty to Animals in Egypt.

MR. J. M. ROBERTSON (Northumberland, Tyneside): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he will call the attention of the British Agent-General in Egypt to grave complaints which have been made as to the recent neglect of regulations for the prevention of cruelty to animals in Cairo and elsewhere since the retirement of Major Jarvis, and urge upon him the importance of enforcing, and, if necessary, strengthening, such regulations.

SIR EDWARD GREY: I have no official information that complaints have been made such as those described by the hon. Member. But I will inquire of His Majesty's Agent and Consul-General, and bring to his notice the complaints referred to. It is, of course, very desirable that adequate precautions should be taken to prevent cruelty.

British Advisers to Egyptian Government.

MR. KETTLE (Tyrone, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether there is contained in the instructions issued to the English advisers to the various ministries of the Egyptian Government, or in any other official document, any definition of the power possessed by these advisers of enforcing their views; whether the advice tendered by them is rather in the nature of a command which must be obeyed; and whether, in case of a conflict of opinion between a Minister and his advisers, the view of the former or that of the latter prevails.

SIR EDWARD GREY: I am not aware of any official instructions to the British advisers defining their duties. All questions of importance are discussed between the Minister and his adviser, and if the Minister's views are in conflict with those of the adviser and no agreement can be arrived at, the matter would be referred to His Majesty's Agent and

Consul-General who, if necessary, would take the instructions of His Majesty's Government.

Police Weekly Rest-Day.

MR. REMNANT (Finsbury, Holborn): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he proposes to move for a Select Committee to deal with the question of granting a weekly rest-day to the members of the police forces of this country.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. GLADSTONE, Leeds, W.): As soon as possible.

MR. REMNANT: Can the right hon Gentleman give a more definite answer, seeing that the matter has been before the House so long.

*MR. SPEAKER: Really the hon. Member is asking, only in other words, exactly the same Question as has been answered by the right hon. Gentleman.

Peckham Election.

CAPTAIN FABER: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he will state the number of daily police court charges for drunkenness in Peckham during the ten days previous to the late election at that place?

MR. GLADSTONE: During the period referred to there were in all ten cases. There was the same number of cases at Peckham during the corresponding period of the year 1907.

CAPTAIN FABER: May we, therefore, take it this was a sober election?

MR. COLLINS (Lambeth, Kennington): May I ask if the Home Secretary will endeavour to procure a return showing how many barrels of beer and how many gallons of spirits were consumed at Peckham during those ten days?

MR. T. L. CORBETT (Down, N.): Having regard to the reckless charges made by His Majesty's Ministers and others in regard to this election——

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order. That is a matter for argument—on the platform.

MR. PIKE PEASE (Darlington): How many of the persons arrested were Peckham residents, and how many came from other parts of London?

MR. GLADSTONE: I cannot say.

Suppressed Licences in Newcastle-under-Lyme.

MR. WEDGWOOD: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he can give the number of houses closed in Newcastle-under-Lyme under the Licensing Act of 1904; what was the sum paid in compensation; what proportion of the compensation was paid to the tenants; and whether there is any record of any compensation paid to the workmen or servants who lost situations through the closing of houses.

MR. GLADSTONE: The volumes of Licensing Statistics show that twelve licensed premises in Newcastle-under-Lyme have been closed under the compensation provisions of the Licensing Act, 1904. A total sum of £4,045 was paid in compensation, of which £255, or rather more than six per cent., went to the licence-holders. I have no information on the last point in the Question. Compensation under the Act is limited to persons (including the licence holder) interested in the premises.

Motor 'Bus Noise and Vibration.

SIR HENRY CRAIK (Glasgow and Aberdeen Universities): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether expert opinion shows that deterioration of the machinery of motor omnibuses, such as produces excessive noise and vibration, occurs in a much shorter period than a year; what limit upon noise and vibration is adopted as the standard for licence; and what officers are entrusted with the duty of periodically making those reports upon motor omnibuses in consequence of which many of them have had to be ordered off the road.

MR. GLADSTONE: The machinery of a motor omnibus may deteriorate in less than a year owing to wear and tear, and neglect to remedy defects as they occur. In such cases, if noise and vibration result, the omnibus is reported by officers of the Public Carriage Staff, a department of the Metropolitan Police, and is removed from the streets until the defects are remedied. In the absence of any scientific standard for noise and vibration caused by omnibuses the police have to be guided by common sense in deciding whether an omnibus is fit for licence in these respects. The cases are dealt with by a small committee, not selected from the Public Carriage Staff, which consists of an Assistant Commissioner, a chief constable, and a member of the Commissioner's staff.

Coal Mines (Eight Hours) (No. 2) Bill.

MR. LEVERTON HARRIS (Tower Hamlets, Stepney): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he can now state upon what date before Easter the Second Reading of the Coal Mines (Eight Hours) (No. 2) Bill will be taken.

MR. GLADSTONE: I am afraid not before Easter.

Unemployment in Berlin.

MR. GOULDING (Worcester): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether the 93,000 people out of work in Berlin in 1901 included those who were altogether without work and those employed for a few hours at reduced wages, and also included males and females.

THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. KEARLEY, Devonport): His Majesty's Consul General in Frankfort in his Report for 1901 states that an inquiry into unemployment in Berlin, undertaken by the Statistical Secretary of the Berlin Board of Statistics in conjunction with the Corporation of the Trade Unions, showed that on 1st November, 1901, "as many as 93,000 hands were either altogether without work or were only employed for a few hours at reduced wages." He adds, "Of the unemployed, 72,116 were males, and 20,884 females."

Shipping Rings.

MR. LONSDALE: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade, when he expects to receive the Report of the Royal Commission on Shipping Rings.

MR. KEARLEY: I understand the Royal Commission hope to issue their Report by the end of the year.

Cornish and Aberdeen Granite Quarries.

MR. FELL: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade, what are the hours worked and the wages paid in the Cornish and Aberdeen granite quarries which have failed to compete with the Norwegian quarries in the supply of granite for the Government dockyards.

MR. KEARLEY: The summer hours of labour at Aberdeen granite quarries are 56 and 57 per week, and the average weekly earnings of quarriers for a full week about 25s. 6d. As regards Cornwall the information is not yet available.

Import Duties.

MR. J. F. MASON (Windsor): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he can name any European country which derives more revenue per head of its population from import duties than the United Kingdom.

MR. KEARLEY: Yes, Sir. Norway and Denmark.

MR. J. F. MASON: Are those the only two countries?

MR. KEARLEY: As far as I know.

Imported Hops.

MR. COURTHOPE: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether the s.s. "Adriatic" has arrived or is expected in a British port with a cargo of hops; and, if so, where such hops were produced, how many hundredweights of hops the vessel contained, what is their declared value, and at what price they have been advertised for sale on the British market.

MR. KEARLEY: This vessel is, I understand, expected to dock at Southampton to-day. The Board of Trade can give no information as to her cargo.

MR. COURTHOPE: Will the hon. Gentleman get the information?

MR. KEARLEY: It is not the practice of the Board of Trade to seek out to give publicity to individual consignments. The total imports, country of origin, and values and quantities appear in the annual Returns.

Compensation for Slaughtered Tuberculous Cattle.

CAPTAIN FABER: I beg to ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether, seeing the loss which is now borne by breeders and butchers through the frequent slaughtering of fat cattle on account of disease, he can see his way to recommend substantial compensation for them, and also a uniform system of inspection of meat by qualified men.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. JOHN BURNS, Battersea): My hon. friend has asked me to reply to this Question. I presume that the disease referred to in it is tuberculosis. If so, I would point out that the slaughter of animals suffering therefrom is seldom effected at the instance of local authorities. Their duties are in the main confined to the examination and seizure of unsound meat intended for the food of man, and hence they do not commonly arise until after the animal has been slaughtered. I cannot make any promise with regard to compensation, but I may state that the Local Government Board have issued more than one circular with a view of securing uniformity in the methods of inspection and seizure of meat, and they believe that the views expressed in those circulars are usually acted upon by local authorities.

Excessive Motor Speeds.

MR. CATHCART WASON (Orkney and Shetland): I beg to ask the Prime Minister if his attention has been called to the risk to life and limb by the speed at which motor cars are driven on the roads belonging to the public, and to the damage done to the roads by heavy cars being driven at an excessive speed; and whether he will consider the desirability of introducing legislation to stop racing on public roads.

MR. JOHN BURNS: My attention has been called to the matters referred to in the Question. I am considering whether anything can be done to prevent damage to roads by heavy motor cars. Driving motor cars at excessive speed is forbidden by law now. The administration of the law is practically a matter for the local police.

CAPTAIN CRAIG: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the hon. Member who asked the Question was himself heavily fined for exceeding the speed limit?

MR. JOHN BURNS: That knowledge would not affect my interpretation of the law on the subject.

MR. CATHCART WASON: Has the right hon. Gentleman no jurisdiction about racing on public roads?

MR. JOHN BURNS: The question of racing on roads is entirely within the jurisdiction of the local police.

MR. STANLEY WILSON (Yorkshire, E.R. (Holderness): Where is there any racing on roads?

[No Answer was returned.]

Poor Law Chaplains.

MR. J. M. ROBERTSON: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board how many Poor Law Unions pay Nonconformist ministers and Catholic priests for clerical services.

MR. JOHN BURNS: Appointments of this kind do not require the sanction of the Local Government Board, and I am unable to say in how many cases they have been made. Some information was obtained on the subject in 1901 as regards the Metropolis. There were then in London, forty-six workhouses and twenty-four workhouse infirmaries. It appeared that Roman Catholic instructors had been appointed at twenty-five workhouses and sixteen infirmaries, whilst there were Nonconformist instructors at six workhouses and three infirmaries.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Will the right hon. Gentleman extend his survey to Ireland, where in 162 workhouses nearly all controlled by Catholics, we pay both Catholic and Presbyterian chaplains?

MR. JOHN BURNS: Ireland is without my pale.

Post Office Telegraph and Telephone Accounts.

MR. HAROLD COX (Preston): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he has yet completed his examination into the accounts of the Post Office telegraphs and telephones, with a view to presenting them to the House in such a form as to show the net annual profit or net annual loss to the taxpayer after allowing for depreciation of plant, for interest upon loans, and for compound interest upon payments made out of the Exchequer, to meet capital expenditure or to meet losses in previous years; and how soon he will be able to publish such accounts.

THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON, Tower Hamlets, Poplar): As my hon. friend is aware, last autumn I appointed a Committee to consider the various accounts and returns presented to Parliament in connection with the telegraph and telephone services, and to report in what manner those accounts and returns can be modified or supplemented so as to show more clearly the financial results of those services. The Committee consisted of Mr. C. A. King, the Comptroller and Accountant-General of the Post Office, Mr. Blain, Assistant-Secretary of the Treasury, Mr. Bromley, Accountant-General of the Board of Education, and Mr. Peat, President of the Institute of Chartered Accountants. I have received a preliminary Report from the Committee, and in the Estimates for the year 1908-9 a separation has been made in the manner recommended by the Committee, between telegraph and telephone expenditure; and the telephone revenue will be shown separately. The Committee are now examining the further question of the preparation of accounts so as to show the profit or loss to the taxpayer on each service. The points mentioned by my hon. friend will no doubt be considered by them.

G.P.O.—Overwork in the Secretary's Office.

MR. CLAUDE HAY (Shoreditch, Hoxton): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General, whether he is aware that the practice of working beyond the prescribed hours in the Secretary's office has become usual, arising from pressure of work; whether two members of the staff of this office are at present absent on prolonged sick absence through nervous breakdown arising from overwork; whether the chief medical officer has made any report to him upon the subject; and, if the chief medical officer has not reported, why he has not reported, and, if he has reported, what steps the Postmaster-General intends to take.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: I am aware that there has been great pressure of work in several branches of the Secretary's office for some time past, mainly in connection with the recent Select Committee on Post Office Servants and the changes which are now being carried out in consequence of its Report; and I highly appreciate the zeal and willingness with which the staff of that office of all grades have met the demands upon them. No members of the staff are at present away on prolonged sick absence from the causes stated, and, in any case, it would not be part of the duty of the chief medical officer to have cognisance of such a case, if one existed.

MR. CLAUDE HAY: Have any officers been absent on sick leave, having broken down through over-work.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: From time to time officers are absent through illness, but I am glad to say none are at present.

MR. CLAUDE HAY. Have they recently been?

[No Answer was returned.]

The Postmaster-General and the Earl of Granard.

MR. CLAUDE HAY: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether fines, reductions in rank, and dismissals of Post Office officials, ordered in the name of the Postmaster-General but actually approved under the authority of the Earl of Granard, are valid; if so, what is the authority that makes them so; and, if not, what course he proposes to take as regards these cases.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: I found, soon after coming into office, that the mass of detail for which I was responsible was so great that, as I did not enjoy the advantage of an Under-Secretary, I required the assistance of a Parliamentary colleague. I represented the matter to the Prime Minister, and requested him to give me the assistance of some member of the Government who was not occupied with Departmental work. The Prime

Minister kindly assented to this course, and appointed Lord Granard, a member of the Government, to perform on my behalf and on my responsibility such duties as I might assign to him, and to represent the Post Office in the House of Lords. I accept, of course, full responsibility for every act done by Lord Granard, with whom I am in daily communication and in whose judgment I have full confidence. I should like to add that I am much indebted to Lord Granard for the valuable assistance he has given me, without which I should have found it difficult adequately to fulfil my official duties during the past two years.

MR. CLAUDE HAY: While I should be the last to question the capacity of the noble Lord, I must ask will the right hon. Gentleman state under what statute he has power to depute his responsibility to another?

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: I have power under various statutes, and under my warrant, or whatever it is called—the document I signed when I came into office—I have power to do what I have done in Lord Granard's case.

MR. CLAUDE HAY: Has the right hon. Gentleman power to depute to another the responsibility of signature?

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: Certainly. I am, of course, responsible in the last resort.

Confidential Reports in the Post Office.

MR. CLAUDE HAY: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he feels bound by the recommendation made in the 74th paragraph of the Report of the Hobhouse Committee, in which the Committee recommend that every reasonable opportunity should be afforded of bringing the accuser and accused face to face, and that every charge made in connection with secret reports should be communicated in full to the accused, and every opportunity afforded of procuring rebutting evidence and of proving his innocence; and, if so, what steps he proposes to take to secure that his approval of this recommendation be made known to all members of this staff and to secure that it is fairly and freely carried out.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: I have given the recommendation contained in Paragragh 74 of the Report and the other paragraphs, referring to the question of confidential reporting, etc., careful consideration. But I have promised to discuss the question with some of the associations representing the postal servants, and I desire to hear what they may have to say on the matter before laying down definite instructions in regard to the matter.

Cardiff Postmen as Sorters.

MR. T. F. RICHARDS (Wolverhampton, W.): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that several postmen at Cardiff, who have been employed since April, 1906, as an experiment on minor sorting duties, for which allowances of 4s. per week were paid them, with the understanding that if the scheme was not finally adopted these allowances were to cease, are now being deprived of the allowances, although the scheme has been finally adopted in accordance with the Hobhouse Committee's recommendation that minor sorting duties should be performed by postmen; and will he say what action he proposes to take in the matter.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: The scheme of employing postmen on full indoor duties was an experiment and is not being adopted as a permanent arrangement, and the allowances paid during the experimental stage of this scheme for exceptional work will disappear as the duties are rearranged. I am adopting the recommendation of the Select Committee (Paragraphs 328 and 341) that primary sorting should be one of the recognised duties of postmen.

Teachers' Registration Council.

SIR PHILIP MAGNUS (London University): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education whether he is aware that the registrar of the old Teachers' Registration Council was appointed in 1902 from among a large number of candidates for the post, under an agreement approved by the Board, which stated that, whilst the engagement was terminable by six months notice on either side, the age of retirement should be sixty years, or, by the consent of the council, sixty-five years; whether, having regard to the fact that the appointment was formally approved by the Board and was accordingly regarded as an ordinary official appointment, the Board will endeavour to secure the continuance in his office under the new council of the present registrar, or give him compensation for dismissal; and whether he will similarly take into favourable consideration the position of other members of the staff of the old council.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION (Mr. MCKENNA, Monmouthshire, N.): The Answer to the first part of the Question is in the affirmative. The appointment of officers of the new council will rest with that body when constituted. In view of the terms of the agreement I do not think any case for compensation can be established, and indeed the Board in any case have no funds from which such compensation could be payable. The position of the remaining members of the staff is under consideration.

SIR PHILIP MAGNUS: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education whether he can now say what arrangements will be made for continuing the work of the Teachers' Registration Council, which ceased to exist on the 31st March, and what sum of money was handed over to the Board as the balance in hand from the old council.

MR. MCKENNA: I can add nothing at present to the Answer which I gave to the hon. Baronet the Member for Oxford University on the 25th March. The balance handed over to the Board was £2,971 8s. 7d.

Suspected Rabies at Northampton.

MR. LAURENCE HARDY (Kent, Ashford): I beg to ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether he can give any further information with regard to the outbreak of rabies at Northampton; and whether it has proved conclusively, by experimental inoculation or by other tests, that the cases reported as rabies were actually cases of that disease.

MR. COURTHOPE: I beg also to ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the Board of Agriculture, whether the two suspected cases of rabies at Northampton have, on investigation, proved to be cases of that disease.

THE TREASURER OF THE HOUSEHOLD (Sir EDWARD STRACHEY, Somersetshire, S.): The results of the inoculative tests made in connection with the suspected cases of rabies were, I am glad to say, negative, and the Muzzling Order was revoked on the 31st ultimo by an Order which comes into operation to-morrow.

MR. LAURENCE HARDY: Then is it the opinion that these were not cases of rabies at all?

SIR EDWARD STRACHEY: Yes.

Foot-and-Mouth Disease in Holland.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS (Birmingham, Bordesley): I beg to ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether he is aware that when he was at the International Dairy Congress at the Hague the wide prevalence of foot-and-mouth disease in Holland was an admitted fact; if so, whether he inquired what became of the milk from the infected dairies, and can he state the result of his inquiries; and whether he is aware of the statement made at a recent meeting of the Scottish Chamber of Agriculture by Mr. J. Spier to the effect that he, Mr. Spier, when in Holland on the same occasion, ascertained that 300 farms were declared as infected centres.

SIR EDWARD STRACHEY: On one farm I visited I was informed that the milk from affected cows was sterilised before sale. The reply to the other inquiries of the right hon. Member is in the affirmative.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS: Are any steps being taken to prevent the importation of produce from that infected area into this country—produce such as meat, butter, and cheese?

SIR EDWARD STRACHEY: I would remind the right hon. Gentleman, who was at one time associated with the Local Government Board, that that is a Question which should be addressed to that Department.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS: Then may I put it to the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board?

MR. JOHN BURNS: I must ask for notice.

Swine Fever.

MR. COURTHOPE: I beg to ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether the Board of Agriculture have received any report or information upon the recent developments of science with reference to the micro-organism of swine fever.

The following Questions on the same subject also appeared on the Paper.

MR. COURTHOPE: To ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether the recent scientific discoveries in connection with swine fever show that the present methods of dealing with this disease are entirely wrong.

MR. COURTHOPE: To ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether the Board of Agriculture are preparing the new Swine Fever Orders in accordance with recent scientific investigation.

MR. COURTHOPE: To ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, when the new Swine Fever Orders will be issued.

SIR EDWARD STRACHEY: The veterinary officers of the Board are in possession of full information as to recent scientific work in connection with swine fever, in which those officers themselves have taken an active part. The results obtained do not materially alter the views previously entertained either as to the manner in which the disease is spread or as to the method of dealing with it. Recent discoveries have of course been borne in mind in framing the new Swine Fever Orders, which will be issued as soon as possible.

Small Holdings.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS: I beg to ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether, with regard to land purchased by county councils and let in small holdings under the Small Holdings Act of last year, the county councils are required to charge such rent as will include, not only interest on the purchase money, but also a yearly sum as a sinking fund sufficient to recoup the whole cost of the land, seeing that the county councils would thus become owners of property the whole cost of which has been paid by the small tenants in hard cash.

SIR EDWARD STRACHEY: The intention of the Small Holdings and Allotments Act of last session is that the charges to which the right hon. Gentleman refers should be included in the rent, but so far as the Board are concerned they will offer no objection to the exclusion of these charges in the calculation of rents where a county council is itself willing to defray them. The matter was fully discussed, as the right hon. Gentleman is aware, when the Bill was under consideration last year.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS: Then I take it the Answer to my Question is in the affirmative, qualified by the statement that the county council can if it likes defray these charges?

SIR EDWARD STRACHEY: I have already told the right hon. Gentleman that the county council if they think fit can include them in the rent.

Ealing County Court Work.

MR. NIELD (Middlesex, Ealing): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney-General if he is aware of the inconvenience occasioned to the inhabitants of the Borough of Ealing by reason of their having to walk upwards of two miles to transact County Court business for the want of direct communication between Ealing and Brentford; and whether he will advise the establishment of a registrar's office to be opened at least three days a week for the issue of process and transaction of the ordinary routine business connected with the County Court, having regard to the large population and rapidly increasing importance of the borough.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Sir W. ROBSON, South Shields): The means of direct communication between Ealing and Brentford are, I am informed, a little out of date, but during the last year tramcars have been running to within a short distance of the Brentford Court. The question of establishing a branch office has been carefully considered, but at present it is not thought advisable to incur that expenditure.

Vivisectors and Dog Licences.

MR. ELLIS GRIFFITH (Anglesey): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether it is customary for the authorities of laboratories, licensed for vivisection, to pay the tax on the dogs which they keep for that purpose; if so, will he state the number of licences issued by the Inland Revenue to such authorities during the last two years; if it be the fact that no such taxes are paid, what is the ground of such exemption; and whether applications for such exemptions are made in those cases as provided by Sub-section 1 of Section 5 of the Dogs Act of 1906.

MR. RUNCIMAN: Licence duties are paid on all dogs used for the purposes stated, but no separate record is kept of the precise number of licences thus issued.

Small Holdings in Scotland.

MR. AINSWORTH (Argyllshire): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether he will consider the advisability of amending and extending the powers of the Congested Districts Board for Scotland by legislation, so as to enable them to create and increase small holdings in Scotland, and so meet the demand existing in the Highlands and elsewhere on the part of cottars, crofters, and others to obtain land for their support and to prevent the exodus of families to the large towns and to the Colonies and America.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): At the same time, may I ask the Secretary for Scotland whether he will consider the expediency of introducing an Amendment of the Congested Districts (Scotland) Act to enable the Board to acquire land compulsorily for the creation of new holdings.

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Mr. SINCLAIR, Forfarshire): The suggestions of my hon. friends are not new and, as they are aware, received the sanction of this House as part of the Small Landholders (Scotland) Bill. That Bill expresses the policy of the Government. It has been rejected by the House of Lords, and I am unable to make any further statement upon the subject at present.

Norwegian Trawlers.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland, in view of the fact that during the year ending 31st December, 1907, as many as 123 prosecutions were instituted against foreign trawlers for illegal trawling around the coast of Scotland, will he state how many of these vessels were flying the Norwegian flag.

MR. SINCLAIR: Seventeen.

Chairmanship of the Crofters Commission.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland if he will state who is now acting as Chairman of the Crofters Commission.

MR. SINCLAIR: The appointment is now vacant, and will be filled up shortly.

Protection against Illegal Trawling.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland, having regard to the fact that the interests of line fishermen suffer through illegal trawlers sweeping the fishing beds off the coast of Scotland, will he state whether the funds at the disposal of the Scottish Fishery Board are yet sufficient to admit of the sea police being strengthened by the purchase of another fishery cruiser; and, if not, will he state what sum has been accumulated for this purpose.

MR. SINCLAIR: I am informed that after the beginning of the financial year the Fishery Board will be in a position to acquire an additional cruiser, according to the arrangement made some time ago.

Foreign Trawlers—Destruction of Fishermen's Nets.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether he is aware that there have been many instances recently where fishermen's nets have been destroyed by foreign trawlers; and, seeing that the fishermen have no funds with which to set the law in motion, will he take such action as may be necessary to enable the Fishery Board to conduct prosecutions in the interest of the fishermen.

MR. SINCLAIR: I am aware of the facts to which my hon. friend draws attention, and I regret to have to say that the remedy which he proposes is not considered practicable.

MR. WEIR: Can the right hon. Gentleman suggest any other remedy for this great evil?

MR. SINCLAIR: I shall be glad to consider any suggestions that may be sent me.

Scottish Education Bill.

SIR HENRY CRAIK (Glasgow and Aberdeen Universities): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland when the Scottish Education Bill which was read a first time last Thursday will be printed and distributed.

MR. SINCLAIR: It is hoped that the Bill will be printed and in the hands of Members by to-morrow, and at the latest by Saturday.

SIR HENRY CRAIK: Will ample time be allowed for the consideration of the Bill by the people of Scotland before the Second Reading?

MR. SINCLAIR: I think that is very desirable.

Alleged Death through Eating Sweets at Stranraer.

MR. GULLAND (Dumfries Burghs): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether he has made inquiries into the circumstances attending the recent death of a boy at Stranraer, which has been attributed to poisoning due to chocolate sweets eaten by him; and, if so, whether the inquiries throw any light on the cause of death.

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. THOMAS SHAW, Hawick Burghs): Full inquiries have been made regarding this case. The contents of the boy's stomach and intestines have been subjected to analysis without the slightest trace of poison being found. The Answer to the second part of the Question is in the negative.

Ballycastle Pier, Mayo.

MR. FETHERSTONHAUGH (Fermanagh, N.): I beg to ask the Vice-President of the Department of Agriculture (Ireland) whether any plans have been submitted to his Department for the erection of a pier at Ballycastle, County Mayo; and, if so, have any plans been approved; and is the Department yet in a position to set the work on foot in this very backward district where employment is at present badly wanted, and the necessity for a sufficient pier to enable the coasting steamers to call has been recognised by every person who knows the north coast of County Mayo.

THE VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE FOR IRELAND (Mr. T. W. RUSSELL, Tyrone, S.): The question of the erection of a pier at Ballycastle, County Mayo, was under the consideration of the Department in the year 1906. The cost of constructing a suitable work at this place (estimated by the county surveyor at £15,450) is greatly in excess of that to which the Department could offer a relatively adequate contribution. In any case a steamer could only approach the pier, if built, in perfectly fine weather.

Whaling off the Irish Coast.

MR. HUGH LAW (Donegal, W.): I beg to ask the Vice-President of the Department of Agriculture (Ireland) whether the proposed Bye-Law No. 2, dealing with whaling on the West Coast of Ireland, permits the towing of whales captured beyond the three-mile limit to any place south of Downpatrick Head; how it is proposed to guard against an infringement of the three-mile limit; whether he is aware that, in the opinion of persons interested in the herring fishery, any whaling off the Irish Coast, even under the restriction of a three-mile limit, would be destructive of the existing fisheries, upon which numbers of families depend; and whether in his proposed legislation on this subject the Department will seek powers to forbid whaling altogether off the West Coast of Ireland.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: The second of the bye-laws affecting whaling off portion of the Irish Coast which the Department propose to submit for the approval of the Lord-Lieutenant in Council does not prohibit the towing through territorial waters to a factory that may be situate to the westwards or southwards of Downpatrick Head of a whale killed on the high seas. Should the proposed bye-laws be approved of, their provisions will be enforced by the cruisers at the disposal of the Department. The Department cannot take steps to banish from the country an industry which may be of advantage to certain poor districts, unless clearer evidence than is at present forthcoming can be produced as to its injurious effects on the fisheries. The Department will see that no injury is done to the local fisheries by the prosecution of the whaling industry.

Mr. HUGH LAW: Is it a fact that the Scottish fisheries are very much dissatisfied with the Act passed last year, and will not the Government make the Bill promised much stronger than that Act?

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL: I am aware of the dissatisfaction. I announced the other day that in the Bill I was going to introduce the Government would take power to grant licences in districts where the industry will do no harm.

Mr. CATHCART WASON: Is the hon. Gentleman aware that it is an abuse of terms to call these operations an "industry," and that the operations in Scotland are entirely ruinous to the fishing industry?

Mr. STANLEY WILSON: How many whales are caught off the coast of Ireland?

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL: I do not know, Sir.

Summerhill Police.

Mr. SHEEHY (Meath, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland what is the number of police stationed in Summerhill, County Meath, and what are their duties; whether one of the constables stationed in Summerhill is a native of Meath; and is it in accordance with the rules of the force to have a policeman acting in his native county.

The CHIEF SECRETARY for IRELAND (Mr. Birrell, Bristol, N.): The number of policemen stationed at Summerhill is seven, which includes three extra men. The temporary increase in the number is due to the necessity of taking measures to prevent cattle-driving. One of the extra men who was recently transferred to Summerhill from an adjoining county is a native of County Meath, but this was not known when the transfer was made. When the facts came to the knowledge of the police authorities, this man was at once sent back to County Louth.

Labourers' Cottages in the Belfast Union.

Mr. J. DEVLIN (Belfast, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the fact that five applications for labourers' cottages in Hannahstown and Englishtown have been lodged with the clerk of the Belfast Union for the last two years in respect of labourers in No. 1 Rural District Council, Belfast; whether repeated letters to the council with regard to these applications have failed to elicit any definite reply; and whether he will direct the Local Government Board to inquire into the matter.

Mr. BIRRELL: The fact is as stated in the first part of the Question. The Local Government Board have no information as to any default of the council in replying to letters addressed to them on the subject. The Board, however, are about to communicate with the council with a view to having the proceedings expedited.

Croker Estate, Limerick.

Mr. LUNDON (Limerick, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland can he say whether, among the tenants on the Croker estate in Moohawn, Herbertstown, County Limerick, Michael Power, so long evicted, has as yet been reinstated in his holding; have the Estates Commissioners sent an inspector to report on Power's case; can he say whether the inspector at any time found the landlord, Mr. Croker, or his agent, Mr. John Barrington, disposed to remove from Power's farm Kirby the planter; or does the Evicted Tenants Act of last session empower the landlord or agent, if so disposed, to remove him by giving him land elsewhere on the estate or by giving him compensation in money.

Mr. BIRRELL: The Estates Commissioners understand that Kirby, the present occupant of the evicted farm, has held the same for many years as a yearly tenant, but that he is willing to surrender provided that he does not incur loss by doing so. The Commissioners have no power to dispossess Kirby against his will, but they are at present negotiating for the purchase of certain untenanted lands on the estate, and if they succeed in acquiring these lands they will endeavour to effect the reinstatement of Michael Power in his former holding.

Lord Cloncurry and his Tenantry.

Mr. LUNDON: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can say whether negotiations for sale and purchase as between landlord and tenants are in progress in and around the parish of Murroe, County Limerick, between Lord Cloncurry and his tenants; is he aware that there are on this estate a number of what are commonly called future or excluded tenants who, in the arrangements between the landlord and themselves in the campaign over twenty-five years ago, were allowed back on ruinous terms; and will the Estates Commissioners, when prices are being fixed, interpose and fix the prices impartially between both parties, or is there in the immediate future a likelihood of legislation dealing with cases of the kind all over Ireland.

Mr. BIRRELL: The Estates Commissioners have no knowledge of any negotiations for sale between Lord Cloncurry and his tenants, and have no information as to the nature of the tenancies on the estate. The Commissioners have no power to interpose and fix prices. The hon. Member is, of course, aware that the Land Act of 1903 is based upon the principle of voluntary sale and purchase. I am not at present in a position to indicate the details of the Government's proposed measure for amending land legislation in Ireland.

Erasmus Smith's Schools Estate.

Mr. LUNDON: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland is he aware that the governors of the board of the Erasmus Smith's Schools are selling to the tenants their holdings on the estate around Pallasgrean and Doon, County Limerick; is he aware that three tenants for a very long period have been evicted, namely, John Harty of Garranmore, Timothy Burke of the same place, and Joseph Ryan of Knockderk, and that their farms have been taken up by planters respectively, Lane, Griffin, and Doherty; and can he say whether the Estates Commissioners have under the Evicted Tenants Act of 1907 the power of removing those planters and providing them with either compensation or land elsewhere.

Mr. BIRRELL: No proceedings for the sale of the estate in question have yet been instituted before the Estates Commissioners. Applications have been received from the three evicted tenants named and are being inquired into. The Commissioners cannot say what the facts are or what action they may take in these cases until they have received and considered their inspector's report.

Ventry Estate.

Mr. THOMAS O'DONNELL (Kerry, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in accordance with the promise that the Ventry estate would be purchased by the Congested Districts Board, and seeing that processes and writs are being served by the agent and that the tenants refuse to pay, steps will be taken immediately by the Board to reopen negotiations with the owner for the purpose of completing the purchase.

Mr. BIRRELL: Although it is inaccurate to say that the Congested Districts Board promised to purchase the Ventry estate, it is the fact that the Board opened negotiations for the purchase of the estate, and I hope that it may be found possible to proceed with these negotiations without much delay.

Irish School Teachers' Pensions.

Mr. CLANCY (Dublin County, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in the case of Irish male teachers in national schools in that country under the age of forty-eight years, with a constant service from the age of eighteen, the maximum pension obtainable is only £10 a year, no matter how highly classed such teachers may be; and, if so, whether the Government propose to deal with the matter in the present session.

MR. RUNCIMAN: An Irish male teacher cannot retire on pension until he has reached the age of fifty-five, unless he can satisfy the Commissioners of National Education that he has become permanently incapacitated for further service, in which case his disablement pension would depend on his age and the amount of his contributions to the Pension Fund, accumulated at compound interest—these contributions, etc., being repayable to him at the same time. The minimum disablement pension for a male teacher of the first division of the first class, aged forty-seven, is £8 18s. 8d., with a sum of £48 15s. repayable as premiums, etc. It is impossible to state what the maximum pension would be. The Answer to the second part of the Question is in the negative.

County Westmeath Valuation.

SIR WALTER NUGENT (Westmeath, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, with reference to the correspondence between the Westmeath County Council and the Lords Commissioners of His Majesty's Treasury, if he will state how the sum of £170 a year applied for in respect of the cost of the annual revision of the valuation for the County Westmeath was arrived at; and if he will furnish the Westmeath County Council with any other information they may require in order to ascertain if the charge is, or is not, excessive for the work required to be done.

MR. RUNCIMAN: The annual sum payable by the various counties of Ireland in respect of annual revision is fixed by the Valuation (Ireland) Act Amendment Act, 1874, subject to necessary adjustment under the Local Government (Adaptation of Irish Enactments) Order in Council, 1899. The Commissioner of Valuation informs me that he has no information as to how the amount was determined. As regards the last part of the hon. Baronet's Question, the county council have been on several occasions officially informed that it is not possible to obtain the information they require.

Embossed Stamps in Ireland.

MR. CLANCY: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether a person or firm in Dublin or elsewhere in Ireland desiring to have stamps embossed by the Inland Revenue authorities on envelopes, wrappers, and other papers is obliged to get this operation performed in London, with the result that such persons or firms have to pay carriage to and from Ireland on the material to be embossed, or to buy the material in London and so deprive Irish manufacturers and workmen of work which they would otherwise be paid for doing; and, if so, whether an arrangement could be made by which the stamping could be done in Dublin.

MR. RUNCIMAN: There are no facilities for stamping envelopes, wrappers, etc., at the Dublin and Edinburgh Stamp Offices, or elsewhere than at Somerset House; and under existing arrangements all material which it is desired to have embossed with postage stamps has to be sent, whether from Ireland or elsewhere, to and from London, and at the expense of the public for carriage. Without in any way pledging myself to any change, I will cause inquiry to be made into the general question of embossing postage duties.

MR. CLANCY: Would it not be possible to arrange to have the stamping done both in Dublin and Edinburgh?

MR. RUNCIMAN: That is one of the points we are considering.

Irish Land Purchase Agreement.

MR. FFRENCH (Wexford, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he is aware that there is any case on record where an agreement arrived at between landlord and tenant, and sanctioned by the Estates Commissioners, has fallen through; whether the position of the tenant-purchaser as a borrower is much safer than under the old title; and can he explain why the Board of Works hesitate to advance money for the building of hay-barns, etc., in cases where the tenant-right and freehold would be practically security for the amount asked for.

Mr. RUNCIMAN: I have no information as regards the first part of the hon. Member's Question. A purchasing tenant is not an owner in fee simple until the holding has been legally vested in him by the Land Commission, and can therefore only be treated by the Board of Works as a tenant. The Board cannot regulate their practice in cases of this kind by probabilities; the question of the ownership of the land is one of fact, and in the matter of the security of their loans the Board must have regard to facts. Applications for hay barns are treated in the same way as applications for loans for other purposes, and the Board inform me that they do not hesitate to make loans to purchasing tenants for these purposes provided that they satisfy the conditions referred to in my Answer to the hon. Member of the 31st ult.

General Post Office, Belfast.

Mr. J. DEVLIN (Belfast, W.): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether, in view of the distress in the building trade in Belfast at present, he will consider the advisability of making a start with the new building which is to be erected in connection with the General Post Office, Belfast.

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON: The plans of the extension of the head Post Office building at Belfast are under consideration. I regret, however, to say that I cannot name any definite date for the commencement of the building.

Bruckless Railway Station, Donegal.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention has been called to the general defects and lack of accommodation at the Bruckless station on the Killybegs Railway, County Donegal; whether he is aware that there is no goods store, no proper passenger accommodation, no sanitary arrangements, but there is a dangerous and neglected crossing, and neither telegraphic nor telephonic communication with anywhere; and whether he will take steps at once to force the joint committee to provide some reasonable accommodation at this station for the travelling public.

Mr. KEARLEY: The Board of Trade are in communication with the County Donegal Railways Joint Committee in this matter, and will inform the hon. Member of the result.

The Law Courts.

Mr. HAROLD COX: I beg to ask the Prime Minister whether he is aware that proposals are being made to build additional Courts over the open space adjoining the existing Law Courts; and whether, instead of further blocking up the Metropolis with Law Courts, he will promote legislation for extending the jurisdiction of County Courts, so that a large part of the legal business now brought to London may be disposed of in the towns where it arises.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Asquith, Fifeshire, E.): I do not that think the question of additional accommodation at the Law Courts, which is one of immediate and pressing importance, should be made dependent on the prospects of general law reform, and, further, it is unlikely that the particular reform suggested by my hon. friend would enable us to dispense with the new Courts required in London.

Excise Officers and Politics.

Mr. COWAN (Surrey, Guildford): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether his attention has been called to the case of Frederick Farrington, an excise officer of Guildford, who has been transferred to Glasgow by the Board of Inland Revenue, as a punishment for contravening Paragraph 1150 of the general instructions (which prohibits membership of any political association), by taking part in certain political meetings at Guildford during February last; whether he is aware that various officers of the Inland Revenue Department are members of a political association known as the Primrose League; and whether he proposes to take similar disciplinary measures against such persons, or whether he will take steps to have the regulations so amended as to enable Parliamentary electors to enter the service of the Crown without forfeiting their elementary political rights.

Mr. ASQUITH: Yes, Sir, I am aware of the case referred to by my hon. friend. If the attention of the Commissioners of Inland Revenue is drawn to any similar infringement of their instructions, no doubt they will take similar action.

Mr. SNOWDEN (Blackburn): Will the right hon. Gentleman say where any authority is given to impose such restriction?

Mr. ASQUITH: Under the Statutes.

Mr. SNOWDEN: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that in 1870 the Lord Chief Justice Coleridge stated that there was no right or authority to impose any such restriction?

Mr. ASQUITH: I was not aware of it, but I will look into the matter.

Mr. WATT (Glasgow, College): Does the right hon. Gentleman accept the insinuation in the Question, that being sent to live in Glasgow is recognised as a punishment in the Department?

Mr. ASQUITH: Perhaps the hon. Member will give me notice of that Question.

Mr. COWAN: Will the right hon. Gentleman answer the last part of my Question?

Mr. ASQUITH: I will consider the question of the amendment of the regulations.

Sales of Intoxicants in Parliament Buildings.

Mr. EVELYN CECIL (Aston Manor): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he will introduce a provision into the Licensing Bill to relieve the officials and Members of the House of Commons from the penalties they may be under for allowing illegal sales of intoxicating liquor on its premises.

Mr. ASQUITH: The Bill does not alter the law in this respect, and I am not aware of any sufficient reason for making a change.

Mr. EVELYN CECIL: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the action of the officials and Members of this House finds a parallel in the action of certain clubs?

[No Answer was returned.]

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL: That is too recondite.

Clerks to Surveyors of Taxes.

Mr. O'GRADY: I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he is in a position to state what was done in the matter of the case presented on behalf of the clerks to the surveyors of taxes.

Mr. ASQUITH: I have now arrived at a decision upon the various questions raised, and directions will be given accordingly by the Board of Inland Revenue with as little delay as possible. I will communicate to the hon. Member the details of the scheme, which are too long to set out in reply to a Question.

Import Duties.

Mr. J. F. MASON: I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, in view of the fact that the amount derived from import duties of all kinds per head of the population is 50 per cent. higher in the United Kingdom than in Germany, and that, in the case of the United Kingdom, they are raised wholly on articles of general consumption, he will consider the desirability of reducing the taxes on food in this country and of making up the balance by levying duties on manufactured articles coming from abroad.

Mr. ASQUITH: No, Sir.

Elementary Education (England and Wales) Bill.

Mr. CLOUGH (Yorkshire, W.R., Skipton): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether the Second Reading of the Elementary Education (England and Wales) Bill will be taken before the Easter recess.

MR. ASQUITH: No, Sir.

MR. LANE-FOX (Yorkshire, W.R., Barkston Ash) asked whether there was any truth in the report which was being circulated that the Government were considering the advisability of dropping the Bill.

MR. ASQUITH: There is as little truth in that report as in most of the others on the same subject.

Mail Steamers at Kingstown.

MR. MOONEY (Newry): I desire to ask the Postmaster-General a Question of which I have given him private notice, namely, whether he has received a telegram to the effect that when the Royal Mail Steamer "Ulster" was leaving Kingstown the harbour authorities did not provide for the keeping clear of the way out of the harbour, the result being that a collision was only averted by the mail steamer slowing down and altering her course, and whether he will give instructions to the harbour authorities to control the way for the mail steamers in the future as in the past.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: I have not received such information since I left the office. As to the latter part of the Question I should not like to answer it until I know what my powers are.

MR. MOONEY: Has not the right hon. Gentleman received a telegram to the effect stated?

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: It had not arrived at the office when I left.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Can the Chief Secretary tell us by whose instructions His Majesty's police interfered with those who were carrying His Majesty's mails, and in favour of another company.

MR. BIRRELL: I know really nothing about this particular dispute. Happily it does not fall within my province. I heard late last night that a man had been arrested, as I understand, in consequence of obeying his proper officer. I at once telegraphed that if that was so he should be immediately released. I understand that he was never in custody. He was arrested but bail was at once forthcoming. He appeared this morning before the Magistrates and after a protracted hearing, at his own request, I believe, in order that an appeal might be lodged, he was fined 40s., to be reduced to 1s. should no appeal be entered. That is all I know about the matter. The police have to be on Carlisle Pier and always have to be there to maintain order. How far they took part in this dispute I do not know. Nobody has been under arrest.

MR. T. M. HEALY: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he is aware that a Petition of Right is actually pending in the King's Courts, and, that being so, by what authority the Treasury ordered police to the number of a dozen to appear on the Royal pier at Kingstown, apparently on the side of the view that the Treasury has taken up on this matter?

MR. BIRRELL: Kingstown is a Government harbour, and I do not know that I am prepared to give any further answer. The police are there in sufficient number to prevent any scuffle or undue trouble during this unfortunate business. It is quite true that a Petition of Right has now been filed and the proceedings will be settled in a Court of Justice. I trust that in the meantime there will be no further trouble.

MR. CLANCY: May I ask whether the Postmaster-General has any statement to make as to the events which occurred yesterday at Carlisle Pier in reference to this matter and regarding the arrangements that have been made for the London and North Western steamers going to Carlisle pier?

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: Last night in consequence of information received from the Harbour Commissioners a telegram was sent by the Post Office urging the Company to comply with the Harbour Master's orders. My position in the matter is this. It is no part of my duty as Postmaster-General to intervene in any dispute between the Harbour Commissioners and the City of Dublin Steam Packet Company. Therefore in this matter I am glad to say that it appears from information received by telegram this morning from an official in Dublin that no delay to the mails has taken place. That may have been, however, before the information received by the hon. Member for Newry.

MR. CLANCY: I wish to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether it was by the order of the Treasury that the porter of the City of Dublin Steam Packet Company was arrested when he attempted to obey the orders of his captain.

MR. RUNCIMAN: I need hardly say that the Treasury knew absolutely nothing about any intention to arrest or that any arrest took place. The first intimation we had of that was the telegram which the hon. Gentleman was kind enough to show me last night.

MR. T. M. HEALY: How much is Ireland being robbed of by this sucessful manœuvre ?

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: The hon. Gentleman says he knows absolutely nothing of what has been occurring at Carlisle Pier: may I ask who is the responsible official controlling the executive action of the police when this occurred, and what subordinate took such high-handed action ?

MR. BIRRELL: I cannot answer the specific question at this moment, but I expect to have information in an hour or two.

MR. CLANCY: Is it denied or not that the Treasury authorised the steamers of the London and North Western Company to go to Carlisle Pier although at the time a Petition of Right was pending to try the question whether they had a right to go there without permission ?

MR. RUNCIMAN: No, Sir. The arrangement made with the London and North Western Company was made several months ago; the petition was only filed three weeks ago.

MR. T. M. HEALY: How much have you gained by the transaction ?

MR. CLANCY: I must press for an answer to my Question. The arrangement was no doubt come to several months ago, but the question is, did the Treasury know that this Petition of Right was to be filed, and whether they will not now suspend the right of the London and North Western steamers to go to the pier in view of the fact that this very question whether they have the right to go there or not is pending in the Courts ?

MR. RUNCIMAN: That is not the information which I have. The City of Dublin Steam Packet Company applied for an interim injunction, and that application was refused. I am not prepared, therefore, to arrive at a different decision from that arrived at by the Courts.

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): Was not the application refused on the ground that the Judge was in a position to fix an almost immediate hearing, and that it was adjourned at the request of the Attorney-General, and, pending the decision of this case, will not the Government suspend the operation of their order whereby the very point at issue is prejudged ?

MR. RUNCIMAN: I am afraid my information does not tally with that of the hon. Member. If the hon. Member wants further information he had better put down a question.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the Chairman of the London and North Western Railway Company is himself an ex-Treasury official ?

MR. CLANCY: Owing to the unsatisfactory nature of the answers I have received I have to ask leave to move the Adjournment of the House for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance, viz., "the action of the Government in compelling under threats of force, the removal of the Mail Steamers from the Carlisle Pier, Kingstown, at a time when the trial of a Petition of Right is actually pending in the High Court of Justice in England to try the very question of the legality of such removal."

The pleasure of the House having been signified, the Motion stood over, under Standing Order No. 10, until a quarter-past Eight this evening.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR (City of London): I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer in regard to the business of next week. I understand the first three days are to be devoted to the Licensing Bill, and I would suggest to the right hon. Gentleman not to come to any decision as to taking Supply on Thursday next until he sees what is the desire of Members on both sides of the House in regard to the prolongation of the debate.

Mr. ASQUITH: I think the request of the right hon. Gentleman a perfectly reasonable one, and we will wait to see what is the general state of opinion in the House on the matter.

COMMITTEE OF SELECTION.

"Ordered, That Mr. Munro Ferguson be added to the Committee of Selection."—(*Sir William Brampton Gurdon.*)

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).

Sir William Brampton Gurdon reported from the Committee of Selection; That they had discharged the following Member from Standing Committee A. (in respect of the Education (Local Authorities) Bill): Dr. Shipman; and had appointed in substitution (in respect of the Education (Local Authorities) Bill): Sir George White.

Sir William Brampton Gurdon further reported from the Committee; That they had discharged the following Members from Standing Committee A.: Mr. McKillop (in respect of the Housing of the Working Classes (Ireland) Bill) and Mr. Field; and had appointed in substitution (in respect of the Housing of the Working Classes (Ireland) Bill): Mr. Patrick O'Brien and Mr. Thomas O'Donnell.

Sir William Brampton Gurdon further reported from the Committee; That they had discharged the following Members from Standing Committee A. (in respect of the Registration of Clubs (Ireland) Bill and of the Ferries (Ireland) Bill): Mr. Secretary Gladstone, Mr. Attorney-General, and Mr. Herbert Samuel; and had appointed in substitution: Mr. Birrell, Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland, and Mr. T. W. Russell.

Sir William Brampton Gurdon further reported from the Committee; That they had added to Standing Committee A. the following Fifteen Members (in respect of the Registration of Clubs (Ireland) Bill and of the Ferries (Ireland) Bill): Mr. Sloan, Mr. Wolff, Mr. Fetherstonhaugh, Mr. Barrie, Mr. Patrick White, Mr. Crean, Mr. Nannetti, Mr. Mooney, Mr. Hart-Davies, Mr. Watt, Mr. Hazleton, Mr. Gwynn, Mr. Jordan, Mr. Farrell, and Mr. MacVeagh.

Sir William Brampton Gurdon further reported from the Committee; That they had discharged the following Members from Standing Committee B. (in respect of the Children Bill): Mr. Burns, Dr. Macnamara, Mr. Paulton, and Mr. Austin Taylor; and had appointed in substitution (in respect of the Children Bill): the Lord-Advocate, Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland, Mr. Secretary Gladstone, and Mr. Herbert Samuel.

Sir William Brampton Gurdon further reported from the Committee; That they had added to Standing Committee B. the following Fifteen Members, (in respect of the Children Bill): Mr. Parker, Mr. Richardson, Mr. Hugh Law, Mr. John Roche, Mr. Hay, Lord Edmund Talbot, Viscount Morpeth, Sir Henry Craik, Mr. Acland Allen, Mr. Atherley Jones, Mr. Williamson, Mr. Tennant, Mr. Maclean, Mr. Gulland, and Mr. Whitehead.

Sir William Brampton Gurdon further reported from the Committee; That they had selected the following Member to serve on the Unopposed Bill Committee, under Standing Order No. 109, in place of Mr. Crombie, deceased Mr. Munro Ferguson.

Reports to lie upon the Table.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

Lotteries and Advertisements.—That they have appointed a Committee consisting of Five Members to join with a Committee of the Commons to consider and inquire into the Law as to Lotteries and Advertisements, and propose that the Joint Committee do meet in the Chairman of Committees' Committee Room on Tuesday next, at Three of the Clock.

NEW BILLS.

TRADE DISPUTES BILL.

"To promote arbitration in Trade Disputes," presented by Mr. Cleland; supported by Mr. Walker, Mr. Parker, Mr. Whitwell Wilson, Mr. Findlay, Mr. Dalziel, Mr. William Jones, and Mr. T. P. O'Connor; to be read a second time upon Thursday next, and to be printed. [Bill 187.]

BANKRUPTCY (SCOTLAND) BILL.

"To consolidate and amend the Bankruptcy Laws of Scotland," presented by Mr. Cleland; supported by Mr. Bonar Law, Mr. Watt, Mr. Dundas White, Mr. Menzies, Mr. M'Callum, and Mr. C. E. Price; to be read a second time upon Thursday next, and to be printed. [Bill 188.]

VIVISECTION (ABOLITION) BILL.

"To provide for the total Abolition of Vivisection," presented by Mr. Hodge; supported by Mr. Brace, Mr. Macpherson, Mr. Lupton, Mr. Charles Duncan, Mr. Collins, Mr. Parker, Mr. John Wilson, Mr. Thorne, and Mr. John Johnson; to be read a second time upon Tuesday, 5th May, and to be printed. [Bill 189.]

INDUSTRIAL AND PROVIDENT SOCIETIES (AMENDMENT) BILL.

"To amend the Industrial and Provident Societies Act, 1893," presented by Mr. Dickinson; supported by Viscount Morpeth, Mr. Maddison, Mr. Samuel Roberts, Mr. Rowlands, Mr. Fletcher, and Mr. Vivian; to be read a second time upon Wednesday next, and to be printed. [Bill 190.]

PUBLIC HEALTH (MARKETS IN RURAL DISTRICTS) BILL.

"To make the provisions of the Public Health Act, 1875, with respect to the provision and regulation of Markets, applicable in Rural Districts," presented by Mr. Burns; supported by Dr. Macnamara; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 191.]

PORT OF LONDON.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE, Carnarvon Boroughs), in asking leave to introduce a Bill to provide for the improvement and better administration of the Port of London, and for purposes incidental thereto, said:—I have to ask leave to introduce a Bill to set up a public authority for the Port of London and for other matters incidental thereto. There have been in the last six years many Bills dealing with the state of the Port of London, showing considerable uneasiness about the Port, an uneasiness which was quite justified by the actual circumstances of the case. There is no doubt it is a very urgent problem. The Port of London has to compete not merely with other ports in this Kingdom, but it has three or four very formidable Continental rivals—rivals backed up by lavish national and municipal subsidies, whereas London, on the other hand, is in a state of practical stagnation as far as the expenditure of money upon the accommodation and facilities of the Port is concerned. That is a very serious condition of things. At the present moment London is the first port in the world, but unless something is done to strengthen its condition it will not long maintain that supremacy. I propose in this Bill to set up a public authority to control the Port, an authority in the main chosen by those trading in the Port. There will be a municipal element and a public element, but in the main it will be an authority chosen by the payers of dues and others interested in the Port itself. The duties of the authority will be, first of all, to take over the functions of the Thames Conservancy from Teddington Lock downwards, and there will be a separate body for the river above that point. I do not think that at the present stage I need give any particulars in regard to that, because I propose to circulate in the course of the day a statement giving full details on the point. The new authority will also take over the functions of the Watermen's Company in so far as they affect the river. In addition to that it will be the duty of the Port authority, as soon as may be after the appointed day, to take into consideration the state of the river, the accommodation and the facilities afforded, and immediately to take steps to effect improvements, if necessary, by means of constructing new docks or improving old ones, with quays or wharves, and generally to improve the condition of the river to make it fit to compete with any other port in the world. That will be the first duty of the new authority. In order effectively to discharge this function, it must have an adequate revenue. The present revenue raised by the Thames Conservancy will be transferred, but that will be insufficient. If the channel is to be deepened and accommodation is to be provided there must be sufficient revenue for the purpose. I propose by this Bill that there shall be additional power for charging dues on goods. I hope it will not be necessary to make them very heavy. A schedule will be prepared by the Board of Trade and will be subject to the decision of the House by means of Provisional Order. The House of Commons will have full opportunity of being heard upon that particular point. There will be a registration fee on barges.

I should like to point out, if I may, the main points in which the Bill which I shall introduce now differs from the Bills which have been introduced before and notably by the late Government. The first point is that there will be no municipal subsidy. I offer no comment upon that at this stage; I may have something to say about it on the Second Reading. The second thing is that I think on the whole it is better to have a small body than a large one. The Royal Commission recommended a body of forty, and the Bill of the late Government followed its recommendation. Having very carefully considered the matter and looked at the precedents of Liverpool and other ports which have been very successful, I have come to the conclusion that it is better to have a small body rather to transact business than to discuss it. Not only that, but I think on the whole you get a better body of men. Good men are rare. I do not know that London could not provide forty, but at any rate it is much more likely to provide twenty-five good men, and I propose therefore that the body shall consist of twenty-five. The other difference is in regard to the municipal element. Instead of providing that it shall choose all its members from amongst itself, I provide that the London County Council shall have three from amongst its own body and that it shall have, in addition, the power of choosing two from outside its own body, so as to have men who are interested in the river, leaving it to the local municipality to choose men who they know will have an excellent knowledge of the conditions of the river. Another point is that in the old Bill there was sectional representation of all the interests of the river. The wharfingers appointed one or two members, the shipowners appointed a certain number, and so on. I think that is a bad principle. If you have sectional representation these men will go there to fight for their own section. I think it is infinitely better that you should have a general register upon which all these bodies will have a voice, and the men who are chosen by that body, although they may be chosen from sections —I hope they will be, so that every section may be fairly represented on the body —they will be answerable to all those who are interested in the river, and their main concern will be to look after the interests of the river as a whole, and not of any one particular section. Therefore I have provided for a general register and not a sectional one. In addition to that, I have provided for a summary and cheap process of acquiring land for extension and development. I think it will be unfair to inflict upon this Port Authority the burden of coming to Parliament whenever it wants an additional acre of land. It wastes time, and time is of great importance, and it adds enormously to the cost of the Port, whereas there is really nothing to be gained except that those interested get extravagant prices. Therefore I provide a cheap and summary method for acquiring and assessing the value of land between certain points—from Barking Reach downwards, because practically it is waste land in the main. Another point is that I have some provisions for the housing of those who will be engaged in any work of the kind. The Port Authority is to see that there is proper accommodation for those who are occupied in new docks, if there are any new docks at all set up in any part of the river. I have also a provision for dealing with casual labour in the docks, which is a very fruitful source of unemployment and distress at the present moment. I have special provision to deal with that in order to regularise the labour in the docks. The next point of difference is that there is no compulsory purchase of the docks. There was a very general feeling against a compulsory arbitration. It has been rather a bitter pill in London in one or two instances, and the traders of the river fear that they might have to pay five or ten millions more than the concerns were really worth. That would inflict a burden for all time on the trade of the river. They said "We would like to buy, but we would like to know what we were buying, and what price we were paying." I have had negotiations with the docks, after having their accounts examined by one of the most expert accountants in the City of London. He subjected all their accounts to a very careful investigation, and as a result of the negotiations up to this morning, about seven-eighths of the dock accommodation in the river was prepared to come in on terms which I think are fair to all parties, and then, just before I came into the House, I am very glad to state, the remaining dock came in and accepted our terms. The particulars will be supplied to the House and circulated with all the figures, and I think it will be found that we have treated them very fairly. The main principle which I laid down was that we should not purchase the docks at a price which would leave a burden on the trade of the port, but that the revenue of the docks should be such as would adequately pay the interest upon the stock. I think the House will find that in the main we have been able to adhere to that principle, and at the same time to treat the shareholders quite fairly and equitably. That is all I shall be able to say at the present moment. I will circulate a full statement as to what we have done. We have had every help from all the interests concerned. I have consulted them all, and the interests in the river have been extremely helpful. It is a very difficult problem, as everybody who has attempted to deal with the matter will admit. Nobody knows that better than the right hon. Gentleman opposite who sat on the Commission which reported and which went into the question very carefully. He knows how many conflicting interests there are, and how very delicate it is to try and negotiate between them. But I must say that they have been very helpful in the main, and I trust that as a result of this settlement, which has enabled us to incorporate the whole of the docks—because the Commission reported that no scheme would be complete which did not include the docks under the jurisdiction of the Port Authority, and I have been acting under the principle which was laid down by the right hon. Gentleman and his colleagues on that Commission—they have all now come in; and I trust that with an authority of this kind something will be done and done quickly to improve the Port of London, to improve its facilities, and above all, to improve its equipment, so as to enable it to compete with any port in the world. I beg to move.

Motion made, and Question, "That leave be given to bring in a Bill to provide for the improvement and better administration of the Port of London; and for purposes incidental thereto,"—(*Mr. Lloyd-George*)—put, and agreed to.

Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Lloyd-George, Mr. Burns, Mr. Buxton, Mr. Harcourt, and Mr. Kearley.

PORT OF LONDON BILL.

"To provide for the improvement and better administration of the Port of London; and for purposes incidental thereto," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Monday, 13th April and to be printed. [Bill 192.]

ABSENCE OF THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS.

The Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence, owing to indisposition, of the Chairman of Ways and Means from this day's sitting.

SUPPLY [5th Allotted Day].

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. Caldwell (Lanarkshire, N.) in the Chair.]

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS ESTIMATES, 1908-9.

1. £473,000 to complete the sum for Revenue Buildings.

Sir F. BANBURY (City of London) said he had a few questions to ask upon this Vote, but before he did so he would like to recommend that the Paper containing the details of the Votes would be more strongly stitched together, because his copy was falling to pieces and he could not find the place he wanted although he had marked it. He saw that there was an increase of £62,850 for new works, alterations and additions, and although he did not say it was not necessary he would like to have some explanation of it. He saw at the same time that while there was this large increase of £62,850 for new buildings there was also an increase in the items for maintenance and repairs. He could not see why with such a large amount of new works there should be such an increase for maintenance and repairs. He noticed that in regard to the General Post Office, called King Edward VII. building, the original estimate was £316,000, the expenditure up to 31st March was £60,000, and the Vote required for this year was £85,000, leaving a sum of £171,000 unexpended. He would like to know whether it was necessary to spend so large a sum as £316,000 upon King Edward VII. building which, he gathered, was the General Post Office in the City. He thought he was right in saying that that £316,000 did not include any expenditure on the land, but merely money spent on the building, and that was an exceedingly large sum to spend on bricks and mortar. He did not know exactly whether the item "Blackfriars new power station" meant an electrical station, but if so he would like to know whether the Post Office made their own electricity, and whether they had considered if it would not be more economical to purchase it from a company. He had had some experience of the making of their own electricity by a large company in London, and they had come to the conclusion that it would have been much cheaper if, instead of putting down their own plant, they had gone to an electric supply company. Very favourable terms could be obtained from the electric supply companies for a large supply, and he suggested that it would have been wiser to endeavour to obtain electricity from a private company than to spend a large sum of more than £40,000 on a new power station. He quite admitted that if a large amount of money had already been expended on buildings and plant it might be, unless there was an opportunity of using the building for some other purpose, more economical to go on in the old way. He would like to know whether that subject had been considered and whether an estimate had been obtained from any company for the supply of electricity; whether there had been any comparison made between that estimate and the cost of the production of electricity by the Post Office; and whether an estimate had been prepared of the loss that might accrue if the existing building and plant had practically been scrapped. The original estimate for the power station was £40,000, the revised estimate was £48,500. That was an increase of 20 per cent. on the original estimate, and he would like to know why the increase was so exceedingly large. The Post Office was accustomed to spend large sums of money every year, and it was somewhat surprising with the very large experience they had they should not have been able, with the very efficient staff they possessed, to have prepared a closer estimate. He was sorry to say that the thing which had been chiefly drawn to his notice in the cursory examination which he had been able to make of the Estimates was that in many instances there had been a very considerable increase on the original estimates, and he proposed, where they had been considerable, to ask the right hon. Gentleman to give the reasons. He did not wish to cast any reflection whatsoever on the gentlemen who prepared the Estimates, but he would point out that unless some vigilance was exercised by the House of Commons the natural tendency was to allow things to be taken somewhat easily, and to rectify the errors by increasing the Estimates in the hope that no notice would be taken of them. The original estimate for the new Post Office at South Kensington was £18,700, the revised estimate £21,670, an increase of £3,000. The amount expended, however, was only £1,000 up to March, 1908, and he would like to know why so small a sum had been spent. Of course, if the building had only recently been commenced there was nothing further to be said. In the case of the Post Office at Blackpool the original estimate was £15,680, the revised estimate £20,500, and the expenditure up to March, 1908, only £500. If they were really to have a Post Office at Blackpool the work ought to be set about in a businesslike manner, and so small an expenditure should not be made on a building which was to cost £20,500. In the case of Bristol also the estimate had been increased from £36,780 to £40,810, and there again only £1,000 had been spent. He would like to know the reason for this small expenditure on all these big Estimates. Had it anything to do with the alteration of the policy of the Government with regard to loans? Was it due to the fact that while they were going to undertake large works they were not able to get the money? If that was so, was that the most economical way of doing business? The whole of the staffs that would inhabit the new post offices when completed must be housed somewhere, and the consequence was that they were paying rents which it would not be necessary to pay if those post offices were complete. At the same time the sites had been bought and the interest of that money was running with no advantage to the nation. That was not a wise, economical, or businesslike policy. Hull was a great example. The estimate in that case was increased from £40,000 to £58,000, an increase of over 40 per cent. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would give a good explanation with regard to it It was not open to the same objection as the others he had mentioned, upon which only a little had been spent, because in this case £36,000 was spent up to the end of last year. With regard to Edinburgh there had been no increase. In that case the estimate was £62,000, but that was a large amount to spend on additional post offices in Edinburgh, and he would like to have some explanation with regard to that.

Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS (Kent, St. Augustine's) did not complain of the class of Votes that had been placed upon the Paper, or the order in which they were placed. The right hon. Gentleman was quite right in endeavouring to secure the principal building Votes that night. Although he might not be able to obtain all the Votes on the Paper experience had shown that in the Post Office great difficulties occurred. Either they had to spend money which Parliament had not authorised or else they were delayed in starting on contracts for large works which, in consequence, might be set back owing to the bad days of the winter. He would go further and ask that in future the numbers of the Votes might be altered so that the principal building Votes might stand first on the list of the Estimates of Clause 1. The House would then always know that the principal estimates would be taken first. This particular Vote showed an increase of £86,000, and in it was the sum included for the post office in King Edward VII. Street, which was to cost £316,000. Last year, out of the sum taken, £60,000 was spent, and he would like to know whether the building was proceeding more rapidly, and whether the £85,000 taken this year was likely to be expended. He was not one of those who thought that the expenditure was excessive, but he desired to call attention to the large amount which was being re-voted, by which he meant that money already voted but not spent was re-voted. In regard to that particular building £316,000 had been sanctioned, and he would like to feel sure that the money was going to be spent this year, because they would then be able to draw their own conclusions as to the rapidity with which the building would reach completion. He noticed that in respect of these two Votes alone the amount to be re-voted this year was no less than £86,000. He did not, of course, accuse the Department, to which he was sincerely attached, of having made any wrong estimate, but he would like to see this practice of re-voting altered. The right hon. Gentleman was anxious, doubtless, to get on with the building as fast as possible, and probably he put down a larger amount of money than was likely to be spent during the current year. The re-voting was in regard to the Blackfriars Power Station and several new post offices in London, and it had also reference to buildings in course of construction in country districts. The re-voting had not been confined to this year; last year there were twenty-eight items in which re-voting was necessary. With regard to the post office at Canterbury, he should like to know what progress was being made with the building, and how soon the public might expect to have an uninterrupted use of it. It was at present being used in a condition of only partial completion; there were scaffolding and other structures about, the site being occupied by the post office and the Inland Revenue office. The total amount sanctioned was £1,700, and it appeared that of that sum the amount of £1,370 was wanted for 1908–9, and that no further sum would be required; therefore, he concluded he might congratulate himself on the fact that the buildings would be finished during the current year. He noticed that there was an increase of £7,000 under the head of maintenance for the increased cost of fuel. He took it that the right hon. Gentleman in making his contracts had not only borne in mind the present rise in the price of coal, but the possible addition which might have to be made supposing the Bill now before Parliament was likely to obtain the Royal Assent. He thought that it was a very good object lesson as to the increase that must be occasioned not only to public authorities, but to poor private consumers. He desired to ask whether the right hon. Gentleman had considered the prospective rise in the price of coal in making his estimates.

MR. ASHLEY (Lancashire, Blackpool) said he had not understood the hon. Baronet the Member for the City of London to say that £25,500 was too much for the Post Office at Blackpool.

SIR F. BANBURY said he did not know whether it was or was not; all he objected to was an estimate for £20,000 when it should be over £25,000. It was a bad business principle not to make the estimate correspond more or less with the amount to be expended.

MR. ASHLEY said that if the hon. Baronet visited Blackpool he would find that £25,500 was not too much. What he protested against was that the original estimates were very much too small, and that they had then to ask Parliament to sanction a larger expenditure. Surely there must be some great carelessness on the part of the people responsible for drawing up the Estimates. Of course, the circumstances of Blackpool were rather different from those of inland towns, and it might be that the estimate had grown owing to the enormous increase of the population of Blackpool during the summer season; still, there must be great carelessness on the part of officials in not drawing up the Estimates for the proper amount. Could the right hon. Gentleman tell the inhabitants of Blackpool when they would get their post office? The plans were begun some two years ago, and last year the right hon. Gentleman, who had been most sympathetic, told them that the post office would be commenced early in the year, but in February nothing had been done. The first work was done some four days before the end of the financial year, and £500 put down in the Estimates had not been expended; therefore practically nothing had been done during some months. If the amount taken was to be £7,500 out of the total of £20,500, then he could not see how, at the very earliest, the new post office at Blackpool would be open before 1911; it might be finished at the end of 1910. What was really wanted at Blackpool was a post office in the summer time. At present the normal population of Blackpool was 50,000, and in the summer it was 150,000; often that number came on a day trip; and if the right hon. Gentleman could only go into the present post office and see how great was the absolute confusion which existed, despite all the efforts of the officials and of the local authority to keep order, he was sure he would do all he could to expedite the work. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would give him some assurance that the work would be pressed forward rapidly.

*THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (Mr. HARCOURT, Lancashire, Rossendale) said he hoped the Committee would pass all these Votes, with the exception of Vote 25, which included his own salary, and which would enable Members to examine him further in Committee during the currency of the present session. In regard to other departments it was immaterial whether the Estimates were passed at the moment or not, because when the discussion was over, a Vote need not be carried, but might come under the guillotine at the end of the session. But in his Department he was concerned with building operations, and in the case of new buildings he was most unwilling to proceed without definite Parliamentary authority. It was desirable that he should get the Votes as early as possible after the close of the financial year, because in England the summer was the most valuable period for building operations, and it was on that ground he wanted Parliament to give him the authority for which he was asking that night. During the three years he had been responsible he had always taken the Votes at the earliest possible moment after the close of the financial year, and he was happy to say that in consequence there had been a great gain of efficiency in the work of the Office. He was glad to be able to assure the hon. Baronet the Member for the City of London, having just got the figures for the close of the financial year, that the surrenders on the whole of the Votes last year was 1¾ per cent. He was sure that this did great credit to the staff who so ably carried on the work. The House of Commons had enabled them to start early by giving them the Votes early last year. The hon. Baronet had asked why there was an increase in new works generally. There had been a progressive increase for many years, owing to the great growth of the postal service throughout the country—an increase, however, he was happy to say, which led to a large increase of revenue, though it did not come to the Office of Works, but went to the general service of the country. With regard to maintenance, it applied not only to new buildings projected, but also to the larger public buildings erected in the last few years. The cost of maintenance, therefore, was greater than it had been in the past. Maintenance did not mean repairs, which were a very different thing; it meant the maintenance of furniture, the electric lighting——

SIR F. BANBURY: Electric lighting is in another Vote.

*MR. HARCOURT: Yes; but it came under maintenance. With reference to King Edward VII's. building, which the hon. Baronet rightly assumed was the new General Post Office in the City of London, the plans were decided upon, and he thought rightly decided upon, by the late Government. In the hon. Baronet's view of the extravagance of the late Government, he differed less from him than in regard to many other questions. He held that the building was absolutely essential to the proper conduct of the postal business of the country, and he was glad to see that rapid progress was being made with it owing to the method of construction, and he had very little doubt that the money provided in the Estimates would be spent by the end of the financial year. As to the Blackfriars Power Station, on full consideration of all the circumstances it was considered that the supply of electricity by the Post Office itself was by far the most economical arrangement that could be come to. The hon. Baronet would remember that the work of the post offices involved the use of a far larger proportion of electric light than any other kind of work. Their work was done largely at night, and, indeed, many post offices never closed day or night. The hon. Baronet had referred to the difficulty of arriving at an accurate estimate of what these buildings would cost. It was quite true that he had given a pledge to the House of Commons last year which he hoped they would see at the end of twelve months, whether he was there or whether he was not, had been faithfully observed. In the past these Estimates which had been put down in order to obtain the authority of Parliament had been conjectural Estimates before the plans and specifications had been prepared. He did not think that had been a good plan, but it had been followed by many Governments for a great length of time. The Post Office stated their wants, and generally the Office of Works made conjectural Estimates, and having obtained the authority of Parliament, they then proceeded to obtain detailed plans. In future he would not not put forward an Estimate until he had more definite plans, and something in the nature of a specification which would enable him to come to the House of Commons with a formal Estimate which would be more closely adhered to. Of course that would necessarily mean delay in the case of certain post offices, and that they would have to wait another twelve months, because he had not been able to get the plans at the last moment which would satisfy the limitations which he had laid down. The hon. Baronet had asked a question with regard to South Kensington post office. In that instance there had been an extension of the plans originally prepared. There was a difficulty in supplying plans, because they had combined with the post office the Meteorological Office on the same site. That accounted for the delay. In regard to Bristol, the original Estimate did not provide for the fittings and furniture which were necessary, because it was not possible to to arrive at a specification of those at the time the Estimate was put in. On a revision of the plans an additional story was required for the completion of the whole building. As to the charges as to economy and extravagance he would not interfere with quarrels between the hon. Baronet and the hon. Gentleman, but he sympathised with him in the accusation, unfounded he was quite sure, made against him by his colleague, that he was unpatriotic in his extravagant ideas. The excess on the building at Hull was assented to by the House last year. It had arisen mainly because the foundations were found to be more expensive than had been anticipated. The hon. Baronet knew how difficult it was before the ground was opened to know what would be found underneath it. There were difficulties in all building operations in which a state of affairs was discovered under-ground which necessarily added to the cost of the foundation. Unfortunately that was the case in this post office. There was also the enlargement of the scheme, and again Hull was one of the post offices which was down on the original rough estimate and not on the ultimate plans. That was a system which he promised should be changed in the future. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for St. Augustine's had suggested that there should be a re-numbering of the Votes. He thought there might be something to be said for a re-numbering in the future, though the actual numbering of the Estimates made very little difference as the Minister in charge could put the Votes down in whatever order he liked, and occasionally it might be necessary to put first a Vote which was not the most urgent in point of view of authority to commence building, but urgent owing to some special question which excited the attention of the House. For instance, in previous years he had put early in the list the Vote for the Houses of Parliament, because there was interest in the ventilation question, although it was quite impossible that he could spend the money until the recess, and it might well have come at the end of the Votes. The money taken for the General Post Office he could assure the right hon. Gentleman was not a token figure, but the figure which it was hoped to be able to expend in the year. There would be closer Estimates in future on the definite plans. With regard to the post office at Canterbury, in which the right hon. Gentleman was interested, there was a delay first of all as to the proposed accommodation for telephones which had not been foreseen by the Post Office when the plans were made. Then the right hon. Gentleman must be aware that ancient light difficulties arose, and if there was any difficulty in the world which was more obstructive to building, and indeed to all progress, it was the question of ancient lights. There was a slight added difficulty in the case of Canterbury due to the contract being carried out in three sections, owing to three offices being erected on the same site. As to the fuel contracts, they had been made after full consideration as to all circumstances which were likely to occur and to affect the price. The hon. Member for Blackpool had referred again to a matter which he had had very present in his mind, in fact which the hon. Member would not allow him not to have present in his mind. It was the office in the hon. Member's constituency, which was one in which he also took a very great interest, because so many of his own constituents spent their holidays there. The delay was mainly owing to difficulties with the Post Office in settling the building scheme. As the hon. Member knew no telephone exchange was included in the post office, but it was specially necessary in a place of that kind where people went for a short time, and a telephonic exchange was now being added to the post office. That had necessitated the whole building being recast and enlarged, and he was glad to say the final plans had now been approved, the drawings were with the quantity surveyors, and the work would go on rapidly. He hoped the hon. Member would not assume that the future progress would be as slow as might be indicated by the amount which they thought it necessary to take this year. In the following year the progress with that post office would be much more rapid.

Mr. ASHLEY: Could the right hon. Gentleman say if there is any chance of the post office being ready by the summer of 1910?

*Mr. HARCOURT said he should certainly think so, but he hoped the hon. Member would not consider that he had given a definite pledge, because he had no fairy wand which would effect its completion.

Mr. STUART WORTLEY (Sheffield, Hallam) asked how it came about that out of £15,700 voted last year for the new post office at Sheffield, only £8,300 had been spent, and what special circumstance had intervened to prevent the more rapid progress of the work. It was some time ago since he had introduced a deputation to the right hon. Gentleman's predecessor in office, and persuaded his Department to buy the site and commence the work. At that time they were able to convince him that a new Post Office was urgently needed because the old one was insanitary to the officers and the public. How much more must this be the case now after these years had elapsed.

*Mr. HARCOURT was sorry to say that there had been a very unfortunate delay over the preparation of the second contract for that post office. He very much regretted it, and the matter would now go on much more rapidly.

Mr. HOWELL DAVIES (Bristol, S.) urged the desirability of pushing on with the post office at Bristol. He found himself encouraged by the hon. Member for the City of London to ask why it was that only £1,000 had been spent in the last Estimates upon the City of Bristol. The ground for the extension of the post office was bought several years ago, and the then occupiers had removed and built elaborate offices elsewhere. For some years the work of the Bristol post office had been most inconveniently carried on. Throughout the whole history of the post office at Bristol there had been on the part of successive Governments a parsimony which had been its own enemy in the long run. The post office, as it was first built, was built very much too small, and two or three additions had been made to it already. He was not at all surprised at the explanation which the First Commissioner had given for the increase in the Estimates that a new floor had had to be built. If the extension took as long as former extensions had taken they would be wanting an additional extension as soon as it was finished. He hoped the matter would be pushed on with all speed now. They had waited for several years, and the necessity, as the Postmaster-General knew, was very great indeed.

Lord BALCARRES (Lancashire, Chorley) desired to say a word on the Parliamentary aspect of the discussion as put before the House by the right hon. Gentleman. He had appealed to the Committee to give him the Votes during that sitting. So far as he and his friends were concerned they did not intend to stand in the way of that, but he must remind the right hon. Gentleman that in past years when he (Lord Balcarres) had been responsible for the Votes the House had not given the Votes of Class I. in a single day. He did not remember a single case in which they had done it. He did not object, but especially on a day when probably the whole of the evening would be occupied by an alien subject owing to a Motion for Adjournment it might well be difficult for the Votes to be granted. If the Votes were not granted and they could not get another day for their discussion, he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would not take that as the verdict of the House that he was not entitled to go forward with the rest of his Votes. The right hon. Gentleman had indicated clearly enough that if he could not get the Votes of this Class it might check building operations all over the country, and that would be an unfortunate thing.

He quite agreed that it would be unfortunate if that were the case, but he did not admit for a moment that because the House from one cause or another found itself unable to pass all the Votes on one day, the Department was debarred from continuing the Votes. That was financial purism carried to a ridiculous extent. If he thought that danger really existed he was entitled to take a larger Vote on Account than had hitherto been the practice of the Department, and in that way he could obviate the difficulty if it ever arose. The building operations now in progress were being carried out from the money of the Vote on Account. If that money proved insufficient for the three or four months or whatever the period might be, he hoped next year the sum taken would be increased in order to prevent the anomaly of a suspension of the building operations under Class I. until Supply had been guillotined at the end of the session. Again he would make an observation not directly connected with any special item in the Estimate, but with regard to the right hon. Gentleman's general explanation. He had told them that he had given a pledge to Parliament to provide firm estimates, and that by so doing he would not have to vary the Estimates so much as in past years. He did not object to that at all, but he would rather that a fluid Estimate was presented to Parliament, an Estimate subject perhaps to large variations, than that necessary public works should be delayed. He had said that to carry out his pledge that nothing but firm estimates should be presented might delay the beginning of new public buildings. Assuming for instance that a firm Estimate only arrived in the middle of March, it would be impossible to incorporate it in the Estimates for the forthcoming year, and consequently the building would have to be delayed. There again he trusted that the right hon. Gentleman was not going to carry technical compliance with that admirable principle too far. No doubt if the Estimates were fluid and subject to large variations, hon. Members like the hon. Member for the City of London might claim that they had been carelessly drawn up, but the public service would stop if owing to the desire for that precision the Office of Works found itself debarred from presenting a general Estimate such as they now presented, for instance, in the Diplomatic and Consular Vote. In foreign works it was obviously necessary that general sums should be voted owing to the impossibility, many of these places being weeks and months away from home, of getting accurate figures in time for the printing of the estimates. Sums of money were voted year after year although no specific estimate had been supplied. He was prepared to support the right hon. Gentleman in extending that principle to Votes within the United Kingdom, because although there might be technical and possibly financial objections the interest of the public service demanded that the buildings should be begun at the earliest possible opportunity. One of his hon. friends thought the Estimates were liable to increase owing to carelessness in the Department of the Office of Works. Those who made charges of that kind did not realise the difficulties which had to be faced by architects and surveyors in preparing estimates for buildings. As a rule it was the tyranny of the Treasury and financial purists who made enormous difficulties which greatly increased the Civil Service Estimates. When the Office of Works felt itself obliged to present an Estimate it had to do so subject to Treasury control, and they would probably be told that they were proposing to spend £5,000, £10,000 or £20,000 too much. Of course, the Office of Works had to acquiesce. The building would be started, and later on it was often found that the requirements of the public service demanded a building of the dimensions set forth in the original Estimate, and a revised Estimate had to be presented. Often in that way the Office of Works was blamed, whereas nobody was really to blame but the Treasury. He hoped, therefore, that hon. Members would lay the blame on the right shoulders. He urged the right hon. Gentleman in the event of his Votes not being passed—a Parliamentary contingency which might happen to the right hon. Gentleman or to any other Minister—he would not necessarily, on that account, suspend building operations in connection with works which ought to be undertaken at the earliest possible moment.

*MR. HARCOURT said he would push on the building operations with all possible rapidity. The noble Lord the Member for Chorley had expressed some doubt as to the likelihood of his getting his Votes that night before 8.15. Last year the House was good enough to give him these Votes before 8.15, with the exception of the Vote for his salary, and he hoped they would do the same again upon that occasion. Many of the works which had been referred to had already been authorised by Parliament, and it was on those works that the Vote on Account was spent. It was most unusual for the Office of Works or any other Department to commence new works in anticipation of the decision of Parliament. That would be an unfortunate rule to lay down, because Parliament was entitled to assert its authority before new works were commenced.

LORD BALCARRES said he drew a clear distinction between new works and new services. The Office of Works would be justified in beginning new works, but not new services. They often began new works in anticipation of Parliamentary sanction.

MR. WATT (Glasgow, College) called attention to the small sum allocated to Scotland in this Vote. He did not know whether the right hon. Gentleman had any Scottish blood in his veins, but he should imagine he had not, judging by the Vote. He hoped that in future he would keep in mind the fact that the population of the country north of the Tweed was about one-seventh or one-eighth of the United Kingdom and that that proportion of his expenditure ought to go to Scotland. He thought also that more of it should be spent in Glasgow; most of the money for Scotland in this Vote was being spent in Edinburgh, £62,000 for a post office there, and £22,000 for new Law Courts, while Glasgow had to be content with a paltry £1,850. He hoped the First Commissioner of Works would in future see that in giving Scotland money it was equally distributed.

MR. T. L. CORBETT (Down, N.) called attention to the fact that there were not forty Members present.

House counted; and forty Members being found present,

MR. HICKS BEACH (Gloucestershire, Tewkesbury) said the speech of the hon. Member for Glasgow was a most extraordinary one coming from a member of the party of economy. Here they had an hon. Member solemnly complaining that more money was not spent in the first place north of the Tweed, and, secondly, in his own constituency of Glasgow.

MR. WATT: There is a constant demand for money in Glasgow.

MR. HICKS BEACH said the hon. Member had argued that money ought to be spent in Glasgow because it was being spent in other parts of the country. He presumed that the Minister in charge of the Vote had selected the places where the expenditure was most needed. It was a most extraordinary thing for an hon. Member to upbraid a Minister for not spending more money in his own constituency. He wished to ask the right hon. Gentleman a question in regard to the new post office at Borden Camp, one of the military stations in Hampshire. What was the necessity for erecting a post office there? He would also like to know if the War Office was going to contribute anything towards the cost. Was the amount to come entirely from Post Office funds, or would any of it appear on the Vote for the War Office? He thought the War Office should contribute if the new post office was required entirely for the use of the military authorities.

*MR. HARCOURT stated in reply to the hon. Member for Glasgow that his countrymen had in the past been so insistent and successful that they had obtained almost everything they wanted, and poor England was now trying to make up leeway. In regard to the Borden Camp post office, that was dealt with in the Estimates last year.

MR. COCHRANE (Ayrshire, N.) desired to join his brother Scot in his protest that Scotland was most grossly neglected by the Treasury. They could vote handsome sums of money to Ireland, but their bowels of compassion did not extend to Scotland. He would be able on another Vote to show how a most important building had been neglected by the Treasury.

SIR F. BANBURY said that the complaint of the hon. Member for Glasgow was not that there was in Glasgow any necessity for a new post office or other new building. What he argued was that there was a given sum going to be spent in Great Britain, that Scotland contained one-seventh part of the population of Great Britain, and therefore the sum to be spent should be divided by seven, and one-seventh given to Scotland.

THE DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: We cannot debate a matter of that kind now.

SIR. F. BANBURY said that that was what the hon. Member said, and it would be a very serious thing if they were going to spend money according to the population, and not according to actual requirements. He thanked the right hon. Gentleman for informing the Committee that he intended to abide by the statement he made last year to the effect that, as soon as it could be done, the Estimates for buildings would be put upon a firmer basis. He approved of the promise that the Estimates should be put on something like an accurate basis. Unless that were done it was impossible for the Committee to know what amount of money was being spent, and he was sure that that was not at all in the interest of the House of Commons itself, or of the country. When he made a remark about the increase in the number of buildings for the post office, and that the time had arrived when it was unnecessary to spend more money on buildings, the right hon. Gentleman said that there had been a great increase in the post office work. He did not think that such an increase had been going on; there had been an increase in the post office expenditure, but not of the work.

MR. HARCOURT: There has been a considerable increase in the revenue.

SIR F. BANBURY: Not so great as in the expenditure. There had been also a great increase in the expenditure on the telegraphs. He thought the right hon. Gentleman had quite inadvertently omitted to answer an important question put by the hon. Member for the St. Augustine's division of Kent. The vote for fuel amounted to £52,000 compared with £46,000 last year. He would like to know the reason for that increase of £6,000, because it was well known that there had been a large fall in the price of coal during the last few months. He himself had made contracts for coal recently at considerably lower prices than last year. His hon. friend near him pointed out that there was a large item for candles included in the Vote. Candles were an old-fashioned means of illumination — he used them himself. When they were spending £48,000 for electric apparatus and electric light in the General Post Office, and the sub-offices, why should they go back to candles?

*MR. HARCOURT said that the estimates of the coal contracts were made not now, but in the end of the year—December; and probably the price of coal was higher last December than it was in December twelve months ago. There had also been a larger consumption of coal on account of the larger number of offices. It was a question of amount of coal consumed rather than an enlargement of price.

SIR F. BANBURY said he was not aware that the coal contracts were made in December. It was quite true that in last December the fall in the price of coal had not taken effect. But he would say that December was the very worst month of the year in which coal contracts should be entered into.

*MR. HARCOURT said he did not mean to say that the contracts were made in December, but that he had to make up his Estimates in December.

SIR F. BANBURY said the right hon. Gentleman did say that the contracts were entered into in December, but he now understood that the sum in the Vote was practically an estimate of what the cost of the coal would be and not an accurate statement of the cost.

MR. HARCOURT assented.

MR. C. E. PRICE (Edinburgh, Central) said he did not know why the hon. Gentleman opposite should urge for a larger amount of money for Glasgow at the expense of Edinburgh. There was no capital in the Empire on which there was so small an expenditure of public money as on Edinburgh. Several hundred thousand pounds more had been spent in

Glasgow than in Edinburgh. He did not know whether the right hon. Gentleman was responsible for the choice of sites for the post office buildings in the provincial towns. Last summer he had been in Stornoway, and was bound to say that the new post office there had been placed on the most inconvenient site, far away from the business part of the town. He knew that the same complaint had been made in regard to various other towns in Scotland; and in choosing sites for new post offices greater attention should be paid to the convenience of the business part of the community.

*MR. HARCOURT: I do not choose the sites. That is done by the Post Office authorities.

Vote agreed to.

2. Motion made and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £342,900, be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1909, in respect of sundry Public Buildings in Great Britain, not provided for on other Votes."

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS said he noticed that there was an increase on this Vote this year of £59,900. That increase was largely accounted for by expenditure on two or three large buildings. The first was for the buildings in Spring Gardens for the official residences of the First Lord of the Admiralty and the First Sea Lord. He wanted to know what progress was being made with those buildings and when they might look forward to the much desired and long expected opening from the Mall to Charing Cross. He saw that there was still £34,000 to be expended after this year for the completion of the buildings, but he supposed that most of that would be for internal fittings, and that it was possible that the roadway might be opened before the buildings were finally completed. He also asked whether any further negotiations had taken place with the London County Council in regard to the widening of the approach of the new roadway on the eastern side of Drummond's Bank. Six or seven years ago when he was at the Office of Works certain negotiations were entered into with regard to the demolition of the buildings opposite Drummond's Bank. He asked whether there was any chance of a better approach being made than he was able to effect. The right hon. Gentleman had been so fortunate in the many negotiations he had conducted that he hoped he had had greater luck than he (Mr. Akers-Douglas) had in his dealings with regard to this site. He looked forward to the new Mall as being one of the finest additions ever made to the appearance of London. They knew what the effect would be inside the Park, and it would be a great pity if it was marred by the narrowness of the approach. He understood that the buildings when completed would be occupied by the First Lord of the Admiralty and the First Sea Lord, and that their present residences would be handed over for official Admiralty purposes. He took it that considerable alterations would be necessary, and he trusted that in the interest of the entrance to the Horse Guards Parade there would be some alteration so as to bring it into greater touch with the existing Admiralty buildings. He would like to see, if money were forthcoming, the removal of that very insignificant building alongside the Admiralty—the present Pay Office. The next item to which he wished to draw attention was the amount of £10,000 out of the required expenditure of £58,500 for the extension of the National Gallery, which he understood would cover only a portion of the site occupied by St. George's Barracks. That led him to ask whether those barracks were now empty, excepting that portion used, he believed, by the Recruiting Department. He took it that that was not yet empty, for there was an item down on the same page for £25,000 for the buildings in Great Scotland Yard for the new Recruiting Station. He might say that that was an admirable site for that particular purpose. The right hon. Gentleman could not have had a better. It would take some time to complete the new building, but when completed he understood that the whole of the barracks behind the National Gallery were to be taken over so that the National Gallery could be made secure from the risk of fire—a subject much discussed of late, and space would be found for very much needed extension. He wished also to ask a question in regard to the proposed expenditure of £95,000—£5,000 of which was to be spent this year—for additional Courts of Justice in London to the west of the existing Royal Law Courts. That Vote of course committed them to the policy of building more Courts in London. He noticed that the hon. Member for Preston put a question that day to the Chancellor of the Exchequer as to whether, in his opinion, it would not be more desirable to increase the powers of the county Courts in order to lessen the work of the Courts in London, but he did not get a specific answer. However that might be, he thought it was apparent that the site proposed was a reasonable and proper one on which to place the new Courts. When he was at the Office of Works great complaints were made against the idea of building on that space. Personally, he had never had any sympathy with those complaints, because that site was purchased for the purpose of building law Courts, and although the garden ground was extremely ornamental and desirable, considering the enormous cost of the land in that particular neighbourhood he did not think they would be justified in continuing to occupy it as an ornamental garden. Some day or other the new Courts would have to be built upon it. He asked whether the item included the cost of any temporary Courts which would be constructed before the permanent buildings were erected, or whether it was the total expenditure for the additional accommodation required for the Judges of this country. There was an item on the next page in regard to £3,000 for alterations in consequence of changes at the Treasury and the Home Office. He thought that that meant changes in respect to the occupancy of the Home Office and the Local Government Board, which latter Department was to be transferred to the new building in Parliament Street; and that the Home Office was to occupy the space thus vacated. Were there no other new dispositions in contemplation? It was in his recollection that the whole of that space would be wanted for the work of the Home Office, and that great inconvenience existed now in having some departments housed outside the present building. There was one item which he did not understand and he apologised for raising a question about it, because it was in italics. In connection with the Stationery Office, £5,000 was voted on account last year for the erection of a warehouse. He would like to know what the actual sum spent was, because if the hon. Gentleman would look at the Estimates for last year he would see that in this respect he had a free hand, and he saw no further amount was asked for this year. He thought he was right in concluding, therefore, either that the work on the warehouse in question was concluded for the sum of £5,000, or else that the warehouse had been abandoned. Then, in regard to the Duke of York's military school, there was an item of £5,000 for the removal of furniture from the present school to the new school at Dover, and he would ask when the buildings would be completed, or whether they were completed. He took it that they were, at all events, to be completed this year, or otherwise this item for furniture would not appear on the Estimates. He would like to know, in addition to the time at which they would be completed, when it was expected that the transfer of the school would take place to much better and healthier surroundings, on a site adjoining Dover Castle. There was another question which he thought arose on this Vote, although he had not been able to put his finger upon the item which he understood was included in public works. It had reference to the maintenance of Walmer Castle. He thought that was transferred within the last three or four years to the Office of Works, and included in the Vote for it, but he did not see any item down for the maintenance of the house and grounds. The House would remember that on the resignation of Lord Curzon as Lord Warden the official residence was given up and the historic rooms were thrown open to the public, as were also the gardens, and they were, he understood, in future to be maintained by the Office of Works. But he did not see any item down with regard to the cost of maintaining the gardens, and he would like to know why it was. Further, he understood from the Press that the present Lord Warden was likely to occupy an official residence at Dover Castle. He did not know whether that was true or not, and whether, if so, that portion of the historic building would come under the Office of Works or remain under the War Office. He would like to know whether any extension was contemplated in consequence of the Lord Warden taking up his residence at Dover Castle.

SIR WILLIAM BULL (Hammersmith) asked, in regard to the extension of the Law Courts, whether it was intended to make any extension in the western area. He would be very sorry to see that piece of land built upon, not only because of the beauty of the grass and flowers and because it was one of the playgrounds of the children living at the back of St. Clement Dane in some of the slums, but because any building on the lawn would mask and hide that beautiful building, the Bankruptcy Court. He would like to be informed whether Street, the architect, knowing that extensions were contemplated, prepared any plans, and if not, whether the First Commissioner of Works had any idea of the kind of architecture which it was intended to adopt. It was a very important matter.

*MR. HARCOURT said that he could not fix the exact time when the roadway through the new Admiralty buildings, which were to be put up at the end of the Mall, was likely to be open, but he thought in less than two years. The structure was going up now pretty rapidly, and he hoped they might open the road through into the Mall before the internal work of the buildings had been completed. Only one half of the buildings that were being erected would be devoted to the First Lord and the First Sea Lord; the other half would become part of the Admiralty buildings. When the residence at the old Admiralty had been vacated and adapted for Admiralty uses he would gladly consider the suggestion, which had been present to his mind, that the building linking the beautiful Horse Guards with the other block should be brought into a greater measure of harmony. It might be necessary to reface the Paymaster-General's office, and he did not imagine that the artistic value of that curious building would suffer thereby. With regard to the houses still standing, the right hon. Gentleman would remember that the late Government considered that they had done their part in clearing the roadway through into the Mall and making way for the new Admiralty buildings. Any further development of the site on the Trafalgar-square side must be more in the nature of a Metropolitan improvement. With regard to the National Gallery extension, money was taken in the Estimates for building on part of the ground which had been already cleared, and, he was glad to say, he was just making arrangements by which at last the surrounding grounds would be finally cleared, so that the National Gallery should be isolated and danger from fire averted. The scheme for the Law Courts provided four new Courts. The gardens on the west of the Law Courts had always been looked on as a necessary site for further buildings; from the very first that had formed part of the scheme, and they had, therefore, never been occupied by anything in the nature even of permanent garden decorations. The late Mr. W. H. Smith generously bore the expense of laying out those gardens, but when it was suggested that there should be a fountain put up, the proposal was resisted on the ground that it might hinder the subsequent use of the gardens for building purposes. The changes in the Treasury and Home Office were perfectly simple. The Home Office required a great deal more accommodation, and it would take over a large part of the Local Government Board offices. He hoped it would be possible to house under one roof all the departments of the Home Office, which it was necessary and desirable to have together. The Duke of York's School would be completed at the end of the year. Walmer Castle had now become an historic building, and did not appear specifically, but in the general provision for ancient monuments and historic buildings. He understood privately that the Lord Warden did not intend to occupy premises in Dover Castle.

SIR C. SCHWANN (Manchester, N.), who was indistinctly heard, was understood to comment on the unsightly appearance of the Museum in Cromwell Road, and said that the two small and insignificant towers on it spoilt the effect of the domes. The figures which surrounded the building appeared to be on very slender stems, and always gave one the impression in wet weather that they were trying to protect themselves from the rain.

Mr. STUART WORTLEY said that some mention had been made of the new Duke of York Schools at Dover, but there was a question hardly less interesting to those who lived in London, and that was what was going to become of the old Duke of York School buildings in Chelsea, and the extensive and beautiful grounds surrounding them. London Members, especially, would be interested to hear what was going to be done with that important national asset. He hoped it was not to be handed over to the speculative builder, which would be in his opinion a very great misfortune.

*Mr. HARCOURT said that the site would be sold, but it might be sold with conditions as to the style and value of the buildings to be erected upon it.

Mr. LANE-FOX (Yorkshire, W.R., Barkston Ash), who had given notice of an Amendment to reduce the Vote by the sum of £4,524, the amount of the rents paid for the offices of the Department of the Board of Agriculture, said he had no desire to reduce the Vote, but wished to give the right hon. Gentleman an opportunity of replying. He desired to draw attention to the inadequacy of the premises of the Board of Agriculture. The situation of those offices was absolutely unsuited to the very important work which the Board had to carry on. The importance of the work was very great and would become greater. He had great sympathy with the right hon. Gentleman who must, in the great experience he had had of small holdings, have seen the inadequacy of this small holding. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would be able to give some assurance as to his intentions with regard to future accommodation for the Board of Agriculture. Everybody who went to the Board of Agriculture knew how difficult it was either to find the official required, or to transact business there. He had occasion to go to the Board for some information, and went to St. James' Square, where he was informed that the official he desired to see was at Whitehall Place. He went to Whitehall and found the official, but was told that the information he required was at St. James' Square and Delahay Street. He had either, therefore, to go back for the information or wait until a messenger could go to St. James' Square and Delahay Street and bring it back, so that he might discuss the matter in company with the official he was dealing with. Let hon. Members consider what such an experience would mean to an unfortunate and perhaps elderly agriculturist who made a great expedition from the country believing that the question in which he was interested was the one question in the world. If he had to tour around in that way, it would be impossible for him to do anything. But if it was inconvenient to the public it was even more so to those engaged in the Department itself. The Intelligence Department had been driven out to make room for the new Small Holdings Commissioners, and it was only recently that the right hon. Gentleman who represented the Board of Agriculture in the House of Commons had been given accommodation at Whitehall Place. It was a scandal that for all these years the representative of the President of the Board of Agriculture had had no place where he could do his business, either in this House or at the Board of Agriculture. Thanks to the right hon. Gentleman some accommodation had now been provided somewhere in the roof of the building and a room secured for his accommodation at Whitehall Place. But other accommodation was lacking, and the whole thing required revision. The legal adviser to the Board was housed in St. James' Square, and his understudy at Whitehall Place. There were no doubt many occasions under the Small Holdings Act when they might require the attendance of their legal adviser at the head office of the Board, and many occasions when the officials there would not have the time or opportunity of consulting him. Then there was the question of the typists. At the present time the typists of the Fisheries Department were compiling the records in Delahay Street, another set of typists were compiling other records at Whitehall Place, and it was quite impossible to interchange these typists, although in the Fisheries Department there might be great pressure whilst in other Departments the typists were doing nothing. The work of the Board of Agriculture was increasing every day, and the difficulties involved correspondingly increased. It was obvious if they compared the expenditure of this country upon agriculture with that of other countries they would before long be bound to increase the British expenditure. Under present conditions agriculture was put in the background. The offices of the Board were most inadequate, and he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would give the Committee some idea of what were the proposals to remedy that state of things. What was wanted was a central office in connection if possible with the Department of Woods and Forests with which in the near future there would be a considerable interchange of work. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would realise the difficulties of the present situation, difficulties which were felt, not only by the public, but by the officials of the Board of Agriculture, who were greatly hampered in their work, although they were not allowed to say so.

*MR. HARCOURT said the hon. Member in moving to reduce this Vote had taken a course necessary under the procedure of the House in order to extract the statement he desired. He moved to reduce the Vote by the amount of the whole of the rents of the offices of the Board of Agriculture. His arithmetic was not, however, quite correct. The real rent paid was £3,870. The hon. Member had not the least wish to reduce the rent, but rather to obtain a building which would cost a great deal more. The hon. Gentleman had spoken with some justice of the small holding of the Board of Agriculture being inconveniently placed. He himself admitted the inconvenience of the arrangement. It was one of the many inconveniences which he had inherited from his predecessors. But it had been his object during the last two years to endeavour to remedy those inconveniences, and he had been looking about in order to find a way of bettering the Board of Agriculture in this respect. He recognised the enormous inconvenience of the present distribution of the offices of the Board of Agriculture and had every intention of re-housing the Board at the earliest possible moment. He had various sites in his mind, but the hon. Member would quite understand that it would be most unwise to make any statement as to them at present because that would only put up the price against him. The hon. Member, might, however, rest assured that everything that it was possible to do would be done.

MAJOR ANSTRUTHER-GRAY (St. Andrews Burghs) understood that the new Duke of York's School at Dover would cost something like £300,000. They had not been told what the estimate as to the value of the old school was, but it was presumably a good deal more than that. The point he wanted to make was that whatever sum was realised over the £300,000, the cost of the new school, ought to be devoted to the orphans of soldiers and not taken for any other purpose. If the right hon. Gentleman could give them that assurance it would be a source of great satisfaction to all who were interested in the matter.

MR. C. E. PRICE called attention to the condition of the buildings opposite Downing Street, occupied by the Board of Trade. Two houses had been recently cleaned and greatly improved in appearance, and if that could be done with the Board of Trade buildings they might greatly add to the beauty of the street. He was not quite sure that the right hon. Gentleman could do anything to effect alterations in the War Office, but the passage which had been built across the front greatly detracted from the appearance of the interior the moment the door was opened. It destroyed the appearance of the staircase and the whole effect which the architect intended in designing that staircase. A wall which faced right opposite the door-way was a great blot on the appearance of the building on entering. He was not sure whether it could be made better by placing a clock on the wall, but certainly at present the appearance on entering was disappointing in the extreme. The right hon. Gentleman's attention, he believed, had been drawn to the danger likely to arise by placing a light opposite the statute of the Duke of Cambridge. He regretted that the Westminster authorities had not agreed to place a light on the other side, for it would certainly preserve the monument from the risks which might be run in time of excitement. The chance of a bomb or something of that kind being placed in the neighbourhood of the monument under shelter of the darkness would, in his opinion, be a very serious thing. He did not know whether the right hon. Gentleman had been past the place at night time, but he could assure him that at present it was a very serious defect. With regard to the suggestion of placing new buildings on the green spot next to the Law Courts, he thought that it would be indeed a pity to cover that open space, which was a welcome relief to the eye, and certainly the Royal Courts of Justice would not be made less impressive by leaving that ground untouched.

*MR. REES (Montgomery Boroughs) said that on page 49 of the Estimates he found that the provision for coal and firewood for England and Wales and Scotland was £2,000 more than was provided last year, while gas, the manufacture of which was not indirectly connected with coal, was £500 less. He did not quite know whether the higher amount of coal was in consequence of our having more public offices, or whether it was in anticipation of the increased price, resulting from the Eight Hours Bill, or the fear thereof which, he saw, was taken into account in letting offices in the City, in which firing was included in the rent. If the right hon. Gentleman could kindly explain that, he would be grateful. As to the open space on the west of the Law Courts, it was a comfort to people going to and from the City to see the refreshing green area. It was a place of light, refreshment, and peace. If that could be spared it certainly would be a source of enjoyment to many, though it might be that it was inevitable that it should be built upon. He thought it was extremely probable that the Marble Arch did not come under this Vote, but he would welcome a statement from the right hon. Gentleman as to what was happening there, because it was rather difficult to follow what was intended in the present state of progress.

*MR. FELL (Great Yarmouth) said it should be remembered in connection with the new Law Courts, that a great number of tall buildings had been erected in the vicinity of the open space proposed to be built upon, and that questions of light and air rights might be raised. He saw that a small amount was asked for this year, which looked as if the new buildings were not going to be pushed forward with all speed. The necessity for the new buildings would be admitted by anyone who saw the loose horse-box which was put up in the Central Hall, and where a Judge of the High Court sat. Anyone who had seen that structure must have come to the conclusion that the sooner that state of things was remedied the better. He hoped that the £5,000 they were now voting would enable the new Law Courts to be commenced this year. The lofty buildings] to which he had referred overlooked the open space, and he was afraid that, unless some great care had been taken to preserve rights of air and light, some difficulty might be experienced with regard to those rights. He hoped, however, that care had been taken, and that it would be all right. He hoped the buildings would be rapidly completed. He knew they were comprised in the original design, and he had sufficient faith in the great designer of the Courts to believe that he had arranged that any additional Courts which might be erected should not spoil the harmony of his design.

*MR. HARCOURT said the Question asked by the hon. and gallant Member for St. Andrews Burghs as to the value of the old Duke of York's School was one which the hon. Member would forgive him if he said that, even if he knew the value accurately, he would not state it, when the Government was going into the market to sell it.

Major ANSTRUTHER-GRAY said he had not asked the right hon. Gentleman to state the value, but to say that any surplus which there might be over the £300,000 should be devoted to the orphans of soldiers.

*Mr. HARCOURT said he had thought that the hon. Member was objecting. As to the disposal of the surplus, that was entirely a matter for the Treasury, subject to the Acts which governed the ownership of the site and school. The hon. Member for Edinburgh had asked him a Question with regard to the buildings of the Board of Trade. As soon as he had put up the new buildings the present ones would be dealt with. As to the passage at the War Office, they attached value and importance to it, and the plans of the architect had been faithfully carried out. A clock was being prepared under his direction to be placed on the blank wall on the staircase, to which the hon. Member had alluded. As to the lighting of Whitehall, that was not a matter within his control; it belonged to the City Council, and he could not interfere with them. The hon. Member for the Montgomery Boroughs had asked him as to the item for coal. There had been an increase in the number of larger buildings, and the item included the prisons of England. The hon. Member for Great Yarmouth had referred to the question of the Law Courts. He could assure him that the buildings would be pushed ahead with the greatest possible speed, and that no trouble would arise with regard to light and air rights. As to the loss of a pleasant garden, he was very conscious of that fact, but if the use of a plot of vacant ground for twenty years as a garden was to be made the foundation of a claim that it should not be used for building purposes, it would not encourage them in similar circumstances to lay out vacant spaces temporarily for purposes of pleasure, if, at the end of twenty years, that very fact was to be advanced as a reason for not building on them according to original intentions. They would simply put up hoardings as was done in Leicester Square for many years.

Mr. HICKS BEACH hoped that the right hon. Gentleman would within the next twelve months be able to lodge the Board of Agriculture in one building. It was very inconvenient to the officials of the Board of Agriculture to have their offices in four separate places in Whitehall and St. James's Square. It was also very inconvenient for agriculturists who came up from the country not to be able to find the office of the Board of Agriculture. The fact of a visitor from the country having to run backwards and forwards between Whitehall and St. James's Square was not calculated to put him in a good temper with the Board or enable him to do his business within a short time. Could the right hon. Gentleman tell them, now that various departments were to be housed in the new block in Great George Street, whether it would be possible to give the Board of Agriculture either the existing Home Office or the existing Local Government Board office? If he could not do that, what use was it intended to make of the old War Office in Pall Mall? Was it intended to use it in future as a Government Office, or to sell it, or what was proposed to be done with it? The hon. Member for one of the Scottish constituencies had complained that more money was not voted for Scotland in the present Estimates. He wished to draw the attention of the Committee to the fact that there was an increase in the amount of money to be spent in Scotland in the present year, under various heads of this particular Vote. For instance they would find that on page 48 the amount for maintenance and repairs of public buildings in Scotland was £2,000 more in the coming year than it was last year. Under Sub-head 5, there was an increase of £300 for coal and firewood.

*Mr. REES: It is only a thirtieth of the whole.

Mr. HICKS BEACH said there was an increase under Sub-head 6 of the same Vote of about £230. If, again, they turned over the page, there was a large increase under Vote G, Sub-head 7, of about £400 for furniture; and he wished to ask the right hon. Gentleman why it had been necessary to increase these various items in the current year in the case of Scotland alone.

*MR. MORTON (Sutherland) was sorry to notice that there was a considerable increase in the total Vote notwithstanding their pretended economy, and a very large part of it, £14,250, was for furniture. When they were well off, and had plenty of money, they might be extravagant in regard to furniture which they ought to curtail when there was need for economy. He was afraid waste was going on somewhere, especially in regard to this item. He quite admitted that it was necessary that they should look after their public buildings, but there was no occasion that he knew of to be extravagant. Although they had not the details which would enable them to criticise the Vote very closely, he was afraid there was apparent extravagance when they had to pay in the coming year over £50,000 more than last year. In regard to Scotland they paid too much towards the revenue of the country generally, and did not get their fair share back. They did not get anything like the proportion they were supposed to have on what was called the equivalent grant, viz., that they ought to have 11 per cent.

THE DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: Order, order; that cannot be discussed on this Vote.

*MR. MORTON was very sorry the hon. Member opposite was allowed to allude to the expenditure in Scotland.

THE DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member opposite alluded to items on the Vote.

*MR. MORTON said he wanted to say, with regard to those items, that they did not get their fair share as regarded public buildings and other matters, and he did not think, therefore, there was any reason to complain that on this Vote Scotland had too large an amount. He would like to ask whether the right hon. Gentleman would give a little more information with regard to the new Law Courts in the Strand. He was as much in favour of open spaces as anyone, but they could not have open spaces everywhere, or they would have no property to pay rates and taxes. That part of London was provided fairly well with open spaces, and he was not anxious to preserve the Law Court gardens as an open space. But the item was new, and it had never been explained what was going to be done eventually with the £95,000, of which £5,000 was on the Vote as a commencement. He would like to know what was the scheme that the right hon. Gentleman expected to carry out. Could the plans be seen of what was proposed? Did they want four new Law Courts? He dared say that even £95,000 would not complete the scheme. They seldom had a scheme without having a revised estimate. With regard to the item of £14,210 for the maintenance and protection of ancient monuments, £3,935 of that was appropriated to Scotland. They had not much information as to how that money was to be expended. He did not think they did enough in maintaining those old monuments, but he would like to know what was going to be done so that they might see whether the money was properly spent or not. A certain sum had already been spent on the Law Courts at Edinburgh, and a further sum was now asked. He thought part of that was for the acquisition of ground, as well as for the buildings. Would the right hon. Gentleman tell them what was the present position of things, whether the building was being gone on with and whether it was likely to be completed within a reasonable time. At present before the alterations were made there was no doubt that the building was a disgrace to the country, to civilisation, and to such a handsome city as Edinburgh, and he trusted that something would be done to give them a decent and respectable Court. He was aware, of course, that all these matters cost money, but it was their duty to find out as much as they could with a view to letting people know that they did a least attempt to know somethin about the way the people's money was being expended. They did not get many opportunities of discussing these things and perhaps if they did not discuss them now they would not have another opportunity, because the Government would take care that the Vote for the right hon. Gentleman's salary would never come on for discussion; it would be no doubt guillotined in accordance with the new but not improved procedure. Therefore it was their duty to take that opportunity of discussing the Vote as well as they were able and to get as much information as they could. The right hon. Gentleman knew that he took an interest in these buildings and that he had no desire at all to be offensive to him personally in making these inquiries, but he was sure that people of Scotland, especially in regard to the matters he had mentioned. would be obliged to him if he would give them the fullest possible information.

Mr. COCHRANE said he did not intend to raise again the absorbing topic which was of interest to Scotland or to congratulate the hon. Member for Gloucestershire for his exceeding industry in going through some of the items in which he had discovered that a few hundreds had been spent in Scotland that were not spent last year. He observed that the hon. Member included in Scotland Great Scotland Yard which also appeared on the same Vote, but he could assure him it was an entirely different place. He really desired to recall the attention of the right hon. Gentleman to his eagerness in closing up the open spaces in London under his charge. He could only presume that he had one eye on the Land Values Bill which the Government intended to prosecute to its success or failure. He seemed to want to cover over with buildings that part of the garden connected with the Law Courts which had been open some twenty-five years. That appeared to be a question which legal Members were more qualified to deal with than he was. He could only think the right hon. Gentleman, in desiring so speedily to build over that ground, had some idea that taxation would be imposed on unoccupied spaces which would touch the pocket of the Treasury of which he was so close a guardian. He desired to ask a question connected with a point the right hon. Gentleman had raised himself, which had filled him with some alarm, viz., the question of the Duke of York's School. For the first time, he thought, the Committee had been informed that that school, not only the buildings he understood, but the admirable open space which surrounded them, would be put up for sale. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would be able to reasure them that it was not his intention to let out as building lands, possibly for the erection of streets and houses or factories, that open space which had been a great pleasure as a health resort to the whole of the somewhat crowded neighbourhood of Chelsea. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman in his eagerness to cover the ground with buildings would spare at least one or two of those open spaces and that the ground surrounding the Duke of York's School would remain an open space for the benefit of the public.

*Mr. HARCOURT said the new public offices at the corner of Whitehall had been allotted a long time ago, and would shortly be occupied by the Board of Education and the Local Government Board. The accommodation vacated by the Local Government Board would then be occupied mostly by the Home Office and partly by the Colonial Office, but it was all required for the extension of these two offices. Immediately the old War Office building in Pall Mall ceased to be a Government office it passed out of his control to the office of Woods and Forests who were proposing to let it out on building leases. The whole policy for many years had been to concentrate Government offices in the neighbourhood of Whitehall and the Houses of Parliament. The hon. Member for Sutherland had complained of the increase in this Vote by £14,000 for furniture, and certainly if it had been a normal year he would be with him. But this happened to be a year in which they were occupied with a new block of public offices, and he was sure the hon. Member's tender heart would not wish to turn even his colleague of the Local Government Board into an unfurnished office. £13,000 for furnishing a great block of public offices and £5,000 for the Duke of York's school furniture removal made £18,000, although the increase on the

Vote was only £14,000, so that in other directions he had made an economy of £4,000 in order to meet the special demands made on him in connection with these new buildings. The extension of the Law Courts had been discussed for a great many years, and he and many of his predecessors had convinced themselves that the accommodation was urgently required owing to the fact that two new Judges had been appointed. It was proposed to carry the thing out as a continuation of the original plans. Judges, Bar, solicitors, suitors, and officials were all agreed as to the necessity of the Courts, and there was no other place to put them except this vacant space.

*Mr. MORTON: Do you want four new Courts?

*Mr. HARCOURT: Yes, Sir. The hon. Member would be pleased to know how far he was making sixpences go in Scotland.

*Mr. MORTON: What about the bawbees?

*Mr. HARCOURT: The bawbees being distributed over some of these heads. He was spending a certain amount in the preservation of the historic parts of Edinburgh Castle, Arbroath Abbey, Dunfermline Palace, Dunblane Cathedral, Bothwell House, Stirling, Linlithgow Palace, Brechin Cathedral, Fortrose Cathedral, Glasgow Cathedral, St Andrew's Cathedral, St. Andrew's Castle, and some miscellaneous monuments, chiefly prehistoric.

Mr. COCHRANE asked what was to be the fate of the Duke of York's School?

*Mr. HARCOURT stated that he had already announced that the site was for sale. It would, of course, be sold, subject to existing Acts which affected it, and any conditions the Treasury might make as to the character of the buildings to be erected upon it.

Mr. COCHRANE said he desired to know if it was proposed to keep any part as an open space?

*Mr. HARCOURT replied that he could not say what arrangements the Treasury might make.

Lord BALCARRES hoped that some portion of the site now occupied by the Duke of York's School would be preserved as an open space. The value of open spaces in the Metropolis increased every day, and if the First Commissioner would make representations in that direction to the Treasury, no doubt they would receive due consideration. With regard to the Paymaster-General's Office, it was a building with some historic associations, and he was not aware what could be put in its place which would more worthily occupy the ground. He hoped, however, that the right hon. Gentleman's improvements would be limited to removing anachronisms and excrescences without adding new masonry to old buildings. With regard to the National Gallery, he was ready to acknowledge that the right hon. Gentleman was spending the money well. The hon. Member for Sutherland was surprised that the Estimate showed an increase. The hon. Member ought not to be surprised, because there was an increase of £1,000,000 on the Post Office Estimates, and £670,000 on the Civil Service Estimates. Next year there would be a gigantic increase on the Navy Estimates, and the same thing was going on all round. He thanked the right hon. Gentleman for the increase in this particular Vote, because there were few ways in which the money could be spent more profitably. One of the items set down in connection with the extension of the National Gallery, was the new site and buildings for the Recruiting Station in Great Scotland Yard, which was very suitable and extremely central. In a foot-note it was stated that the accommodation which this building used to have behind the National Gallery would in future be adapted to extend the National Portrait Gallery. Few public institutions were more valuable than that, and it was now in a very congested state. Therefore, he thought the right hon. Gentleman was doing well to make provision for its enlargement. He was a trustee of the National Portrait Gallery, which he considered was a very important institution, and sadly needed extension. It was a sad thing, month after month, when interesting and valuable portraits were offered, that the trustees had to consider whether they were justified in accepting a picture which they could not exhibit to the public. He hoped that in deciding upon these extensions the claims of the National Portrait Gallery would not be overlooked. He was not pressing the right hon. Gentleman to make a grant at once or complaining of the amount being voted towards the National Gallery, but he urged that in complying with the demands of the National Gallery they should not encroach upon the space which would legitimately fall to the extension of the National Portrait Gallery, because there was plenty of room for both. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would make an ample extension in that direction whenever the finances would permit.

*MR. HARCOURT said that with regard to what had been said about preserving the open space in connection with the Duke of York's School he would see that the views which had been expressed were placed before the Treasury. In reply to the noble Lord the Member for Chorley he might say that he had neither the money for nor the intention of altering the Paymaster-General's Office. As for the National Portrait Gallery, no Vote was put down for its extension, but that had always been present to his mind and it was one of the objects for which he desired to clear the site behind the Gallery. All his plans for the extension of the National Gallery had always left a place for the extension of the National Portrait Gallery, which was greatly needed, and when he could get rid of the Recruiting Station and obtain the money from the Treasury or anybody else that would be done.

MR. T. L. CORBETT expressed his gratitude to the right hon. Gentleman for what he had done in many ways to improve the accommodation for Members in the House. He had, however, risen simply for the purpose of asking what was the actual amount the right hon. Gentleman was going to spend on historic buildings and prehistoric monuments in Scotland. The right hon. Gentleman had read a long and startling list and he did not quite grasp what the amount was.

*MR. HARCOURT: The amount is £2,935 for Scotland alone.

MR. T. L. CORBETT asked what was going to be spent on the same kind of work in Ireland?

THE DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: That will not be in order on this Vote.

MR. LANE-FOX said he understood the right hon. Gentleman to state when dealing with the question of ancient monuments in Scotland that certain sums had been spent in repairing cathedrals. His experience was that Scotland was very ably and thoroughly represented in the House, and generally she got a great deal more than she was entitled to. [Cries of "No."] Well, if she did not, that was not the fault of her representatives. He wished to know why cathedrals in Scotland should be repaired at the public expense, while English cathedrals were not. Two years ago he asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer for a grant in favour of an English cathedral, and he received a point blank refusal. Why should there be any difference between Scotland and England in that matter?

SIR F. BANBURY said he did not see why public money should be spent on cathedrals in Scotland, while the same thing was not done in England. He wished to know when the entrance to Trafalgar Square, at the end of the road in front of Buckingham Palace, would be open for traffic. The road had been open for two years, and he could not see why the part to which he referred should not be made available for traffic, even though the official residences in connection with the Admiralty were not yet completed. It would be a great public convenience if the road into Trafalgar Square were open. It might not be possible to open the road in a finished state, on account of the building operations, but he did not see why there should not be a temporary opening for vehicular traffic. He thought about £20 would do the whole thing. The proposed extension of the Patent Office might be necessary, but he wished to know why so large a sum as £90,000 should be spent upon it. He should think that owing to the protective policy of the President of the Board of Trade there would be an increase in the amount of work done under the new patents law, but the sum proposed to be spent in extending the office seemed to be very large. He could not join the hon. Member for Great Yarmouth in expressing confidence in the design for the extension of the Law Courts. He thought he was correct in saying that Judges, barristers, and suitors were agreed that the ventilation and accommodation in the Law Courts were unsatisfactory, although the outer shell was beautiful. The hon. Member had said that in the new building there would be light and air. That was exactly what he understood there had never been in the present buildings, and if there was the same error in the design of the new buildings they would be as unsuitable for their purpose as apparently the older buildings had turned out to be. As a protest against money being spent on Scottish cathedrals, he begged to move to reduce the Vote by £500.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £342,400, be granted for the said Service."—(*Sir F. Banbury.*)

*MR. HARCOURT expressed the hope that the hon. Baronet would not carry his protest further. The history of the responsibility of the Crown for the slight maintenance of certain ecclesiastical buildings was this. After the abolition of Episcopacy in the Established Church of Scotland the obligation of supporting certain collegiate and ecclesiastical buildings was transferred to the Crown. The expenses of these repairs were borne by the hereditary revenues of the Crown up till 1832, and then transferred to the Vote for public buildings on the recommendation of a Committee of this House which sat in 1831. The whole thing amounted to very little in money. It was an obligation which this country took over with the Union. The road from Buckingham Palace to Trafalgar Square would be known as The Mall. It was not possible to open it in the way suggested by the hon. Baronet until the new buildings were nearer completion. The hon. Baronet would understand that if the road at that point were opened, traffic would have to go through what was practically a builder's yard when building operations were going on. It would be impossible for the contractor properly to carry on his work if traffic went through there, and in the event of accident to any member of the public he was not sure on whom the liability would fall. It was necessary to keep up the hoarding when the foundations were being put in. The superstructure was now going up which included the arches. The sum stated in the Vote for the Patent Office included the cost of the site as well as the buildings, and therefore the amount was not so large as it seemed on paper. The work of the Patent Office had very largely increased as the result of recent legislation, and the effect of that increase had been generally to the advantage of English trade.

MR. MITCHELL-THOMSON (Lanarkshire, N.W.) said he would vote against the Amendment if there should be a division. The cathedrals in Scotland were great historic monuments. It was for want of a little money applied at the right time that these monuments were allowed to go to wreck and ruin. That was the case of a historic building for which a small sum was required at present in order to save the expenditure of a greater sum in future. The hon. Member for the Barkston Ash Division had stated that Scotland got too much and England too little.

THE DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: It is out of order on this Vote to discuss the general finances of the two kingdoms.

MR. MITCHELL-THOMSON said that if it had been in order to read an official Paper which he held in his hand he would have been able to show that Scotland not only contributed more than her share, but that she did not get all she was entitled to.

SIR F. BANBURY said there were cathedrals in England of great historic interest which were in want of money. Winchester Cathedral was as great as any in Scotland, and it had fallen into decay. A short time ago he had, out of his slender means, contributed for the repair of that cathedral.

MR. MITCHELL-THOMSON: So did I.

SIR F. BANBURY said that that was no reason why the Government should cut out the "predominant partner," and only give to the more importunate member of the Union. He was not aware of anything in the Act of Union which compelled Great Britain to undertake the repair of these particular places. He gathered that a certain number of buildings were taken over under the Act of Union. If they were bound under the Act of Union to maintain them he would not go to a division.

*MR. MORTON said that in regard to the question of the repair of St. Andrew's Cathedral, although it was not specifically mentioned in the Act of Union, a bargain was made between the two nations that certain castles, palaces and other buildings were to be kept in repair at the national expense. He would be the last person in the world to vote public money for sectarian purposes, but he hoped they would still be allowed to carry out honestly a bargain made between the two countries at the time of the Union. He was astonished to hear that the richest Church in the world was allowing Winchester or any other cathedral in England to go to ruin. There was plenty of money belonging to that Church, so let the hon. Baronet appeal to them. He had always heard that whenever the disestablishment of the Church of England took place—he did not know when that was going to happen—the cathedrals would be claimed and preserved as public buildings.

THE DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: Order, order. That question does not arise on this Vote.

*MR. MORTON said he was only trying to answer the hon. Baronet who represented the City of London; and to explain that the small sum asked for for the repair of St. Andrews Cathedral, was part of the bargain made at the time of the Union.

*MR. HARCOURT said he wished to explain as to the Act of Union. He did not say that the maintenance of these buildings was specified in the Act of Union, but that the Act of Union set forth that Great Britain was to take over all the obligations of the Crown of Scotland, and the maintenance of this building was one of these obligations.

MR. FELL said he was delighted to hear his hon. friend bringing up the question of the Board of Agriculture and he hoped before long to see all the departments of that Board under one roof. He saw that there was a considerable increase in the cost of electric current this year, and also that there was an item of £3,000 for carrying out alterations and changes in the Home Office. It seemed to him that that was rather a large sum, as he understood that it was the expense of interior decorations. If so, he hoped those responsible would have the benefit of the right hon. Gentleman's well-known artistic taste.

*MR. HARCOURT said he was afraid those alterations were merely structural. If the hon. Member only knew the difficulty of making these internal structural alterations he would not say that £3,000 was too large a sum.

MR. T. L. CORBETT said that the hon. Member for Sutherland had stated that he would be the last man to agree to a Vote for sectarian purposes, and yet the hon. Member had voted the other night for what was clearly an Irish sectarian University. Before they went to a division on this very considerable Vote for Scotland they were entitled to know whether Ireland was to have an equivalent grant given to her.

*MR. HARCOURT: This Vote is entirely devoted to England, Scotland and Wales.

MR. T. L. CORBETT thought that when voting large sums of money for pre-historic buildings and cathedrals in Scotland they were entitled to know whether an equivalent grant was to be given to Ireland.

*MR. HARCOURT: No.

*MR. LUPTON (Lincolnshire, Sleaford) said he wished to draw attention to the new vaccine-station at Enfield, which was built for the purpose of a cruel kind of vivisection. He understood that calves were at that institution strapped down to a table, and that 150 wounds were made with a knife in their skin for vaccination purposes. These wounds were then rubbed with some virulent matter. The calves were then removed to their stalls, and their heads strapped up to prevent them from licking their wounds. In a few days pustules developed, and the calves were then again strapped down on the table, and the pustules were scraped off to make what is called "vaccine lymph."

THE DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: Would the hon. Gentleman say what item he is referring to?

MR. LUPTON: Vote IX., A. 13.

THE DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: That item is on last year's Estimates and not under the Vote for this year.

SIR F. BANBURY said he wished to thank the right hon. Gentleman for his explanation in regard to St. Andrews Cathedral. He understood that though that Cathedral was not mentioned in the Act of Union, it was a perfectly agreed understanding that that building was to be maintained. He would, therefore, ask leave to withdraw his Amendment.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Original Question put, and agreed to.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £52,400 (including a Supplementary sum of £13,000), be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1909, for Expenditure in respect of Diplomatic and Consular Buildings, and for the maintenance of certain Cemeteries Abroad."

*MR. HICKS BEACH moved the reduction of the Vote by £100 in order to call attention to two items—£9,500 for the erection of a new Legation at Adis Abeba, and £4,500 for the erection of bungalows at Peitaho, the estimates for the total cost of these works being not yet fixed. Why should they be asked to make those Votes when the Estimates for the whole of the work were not yet settled? That was not a good way of doing business. He had no doubt that a new Legation at Adis Abeba was necessary, but he was not quite so sure about the bungalows at Peitaho, which he supposed were for the use of the students and members of the Legation during the hot season, and would consequently not be occupied all the year round. He quite realised the desirability of our representatives having a summer resort outside Peking, but if it were possible would it not be more economical to hire bungalows for the summer months than to build them? Then he wished to draw attention to the new Consulates to be erected at Cairo, Port Said, Dakar, Mouravia, Stanleyville, Boma, and Seoul, and to the rebuilding of the Consulate at Nagasaki. No doubt new Consulates were necessary, but he asked whether the Government were taking any steps to improve the position and *status* of the Consuls in various parts of the world who were looking after the interests of British trade. Then as to the new Consulate at Mukden, he saw that the Estimate was £10,000, while only £1,000 was taken for this year. At that rate it would take ten years for the completion of the work, and he hoped that time would not be occupied as it was most important to British interests and commerce that we should have a Consulate in that part of Manchuria as soon as possible. The sooner it was in working order the better it would be for this country. The point in the Vote, however, that he particularly wished to draw attention to was the voting of certain sums of money for building at Adis Abeta and Peitaho, when the Committee were given no idea at all as to what the total expenditure on those two items are likely to be. That he considered to be a novel and undesirable method of controlling the expenditure of the country, and on that ground he begged to move the reduction of the Vote by £100.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum not exceeding £52,300 be granted for the said Service."—(*Mr. Hicks Beach.*)

*MR. FELL said that he also had a notice down to reduce the Vote in order to call attention to the excessive cost of the Embassy at Paris, although it might seem a little invidious to do so, because the Vote showed a marked decrease from last year to the extent of £25,000. He considered that Consuls were required in a good many places where they were not now provided, although he could not touch upon those matters upon the present Vote. His reason for objecting to the large expenditure on the Paris Embassy was that there were not sufficient Consuls in these new and growing countries, while perhaps we were too well-supplied with Embassies and Legations in the old. No doubt the Cairo Consulate was commenced to be erected at an unfortunate time, as there had been a great development of the building trade in Egypt in the last few years which had doubtless added to the cost. The original Estimate was £6,000, but he saw the cost was now put down at £11,000. It might possibly be explained that the increased cost of building was the cause of the error in the Estimate, but things were duller at the present time in Egypt and there might be a saving next year. With regard to the Dakka Consulate he was glad to see that the final Vote they were asked for £3,000 would complete it. It was a very small place on the West Coast of Africa, and they were spending £10,000 upon it, which seemed to be a considerable sum for the kind of bungalow building which would be put up. Then with regard to Stanleyville, he viewed the proposals there with extreme pleasure, because it would give them some opportunity of getting information from that great country, and of learning the truth about the Congo, apart from the *pro* and *contra* statements which were now put forward. At Teheran, the capital of Persia, they were spending £5,000 for the erection of houses for military attachés and student interpreters. He considered that that was a good sign as those student interpreters would be exceedingly valuable in the future in helping us in regard to the position which we should hold in that country. He would be glad to see a Consulate at Mukden, and his objection was that we had not enough of these Consulates, especially in new countries like the great territory of Manchuria, which would in time to come probably be a great place for the development of British trade. He could not help noticing that the £20,000 item of last year did not appear in this year's Estimates, so that it appeared that no further sites were to be acquired this year. That he regretted exceedingly. Reverting to the Paris Embassy he said it was the spoilt child of their Embassies, and the sum which the existing magnificent palace had cost was extremely great, and he feared from the way they were voting money on that Embassy from year to year, that they might be induced in the future to vote further large sums for beautifying that great palace and the gardens which made it certainly one of the most beautiful embassies in the world. It was quite true that it was necessary that we should have a great Embassy at Paris, but it must be remembered that now Paris occupied a very different position from what it did in the past. It was at one time the diplomatic centre of the world, but whether that attribute had passed to Berlin or the United States he would not stop to discuss. They ought, however, to consider whether they ought to spend much more on that gorgeous palace. He noticed a curious remark which had been made about that palace. It was said that Lord Rosebery found among the old furniture in the Foreign Office some old tapestries, which were sent over to adorn the Embassy in Paris. That was another example of that Embassy being the spoilt child of such institutions. They had not too many old tapestries in England, and yet those were sent over to adorn the Embassy in Paris. Then as to the Chancery attached to the Embassy in which the official work was done, he had opposed the Vote of £5,000 last year, and he seemed to have done so correctly, because none of the money was spent during the year, and evidently none was wanted. Of course they voted it, but still it was not needed. In this year for the Chancery, however, there appeared an item of £5,400, and he could only regret that so much was being spent upon it. He supposed it was to be completed. But that was not the whole amount that they spent upon the Paris Embassy, because there was an item for electric lighting, and in another item of £28,270 for maintenance, repairs, etc. It was said that it included maintenance and repair of plate, and the State rooms and Chancery furniture and charges for maintenance, including those of the grounds and gardens. There was a note to the effect that it included the Paris Embassy, so that not only were we spending in the last two or three years great sums in repairs, and £5,400 on the Chancery, but an indefinite sum in this way. He considered that some drag must be put upon the expenditure in Paris, and he therefore supported the Motion for reduction.

*MR. HARCOURT said that an hon. Member particularly wanted to know what would be the ultimate cost of the new legation house at Adis Abeba. He had carefully avoided putting any sum in the Estimates because he was not able to give what it would cost exactly, as he had not been able to get exact figures, but he believed it would cost £20,000, and he had sent a man out there to superintend the work. The building at Peitaiho was a necessary summer residence for the Minister and the Legation at Pekin, as they really could not remain in Pekin during the summer. That, he believed, would cost £8,000. Those were the latest Estimates, but they were not so closely trustworthy that he could put them in the Estimates. The Government did not provide all Consuls with houses, and they were only provided with them in distant places where it was difficult to get accommodation or where there were special causes. He had nothing to do with the *status* of the Consuls, as that belonged to the Foreign Office; he had only to get the Consul a house if he was asked to do so and when he could. As to the Mukden Consulate, there was no intention to spread the cost over ten years, but he had taken only £1,000 of the £10,000 because that was all that could be spent this year. After this year the money would be rapidly spent, indeed very rapidly, and there was no intention of spreading the expenditure over ten years. The hon. Member for Great Yarmouth asked about the Paris Embassy. The Chancery was very old and was very unfit for the amount of work that had to be transacted there. The increase at Cairo was due entirely to the fact that the original Estimate was merely a rough one which was sent him by the Consul, and he was endeavouring to avoid a similar thing occurring in future. An hon. Member had referred to the sites. The House of Commons was good enough to give him £20,000 last year for the purchase of sites without his telling where he was going to buy them, because obviously if he stated where he was going to buy he would put up the price against himself. If none of that £20,000 was spent it was only because an agreement about one of those sites could not be made till after 31st March. If it had been paid over before the end of the financial year it would not have appeared in the Votes, but next week he would pay £13,000. In future he thought it was hardly worth while to ask for a Vote for a lump sum of which he could not give any details, but he could assure the Committee that if he had an opportunity during the year of purchasing suitable sites where they wanted them he should not hesitate to do so and come to the House for confirmation of his action. He might mention that a site for a new Legation had been given to them by the Bulgarian Government and he would proceed to erect the house as soon as possible

MR. BOWLES (Lambeth, Norwood) said the right hon. Gentleman had stated that he could not put on the Estimate the cost of certain buildings because he had no idea of it, but if he would look at the Estimate as it stood he would see that that was a very novel doctrine on his part and that of his office. The outstanding characteristics of the Estimates was that they never did know what the total cost of any one of these buildings was. He would take the new Consulate at Cairo. It was originally said it would cost £6,000. The House of Commons last year voted £4,000. £11,000 was spent and they were now asked for another £2,500. Having spent £11,000, that was to say £7,000 more than the House voted, and £5,000 more than the total Estimate, the right hon. Gentleman now asked for a further £2,500. In the face of such an Estimate as that it was somewhat courageous on the part of the right hon. Gentleman to suggest that he did not put in the departmental Estimate for big works because it was not close enough. If hon. Gentlemen looked at Item 8 they would find exactly the same thing. The right hon. Gentleman or his predecessor came down and asked for £7,500 for a new Consulate at Cairo. The House granted £5,000. The right hon. Gentleman spent not the £5,000 granted; not the £7,500 he said it would cost; but £9,000, and now came and asked for a further £700. The fact was that the right hon. Gentleman and his department had no notion what these works would cost. Hon. Members had only to look at the Estimate to see that the administration of the money voted for these purposes was in a most confused condition. What happened was that the right hon. Gentleman came down year after year with a long list of works and the amount he required for them, and directly he got the money the whole thing went by the board. He took money for various items and diverted it to some other purposes. He did not think any hon. Member could look through the Estimates seriously and without prejudice without becoming perfectly aware of the confused condition of them. If it was only to mark his displeasure and what ought to be the displeasure of the Committee at this continual upsetting and falsifying of the Estimates, on the faith of which the Committee granted continually these large sums, he should have no hesitation in following his hon. friend into the lobby.

*MR. REES said it was not easy to get accurate Estimates from the uttermost ends of the world, and to his mind it was somewhat surprising that the Estimates were as accurate as they were. One hon. Member had drawn attention to the item for bungalows in China, but if he had seen the houses of Pekin in the summer he would acknowledge that these seaside bungalows were absolutely necessary in order that the officers who occupied stuffy houses in narrow streets in the capital, who suffered, and probably shortened their lives from the want of change of air, might do their work under better conditions. A little more familiarity on the part of hon. Members with these places would explain to them the increase in the Estimates, quite apart from the necessity of keeping up our prestige, which in these countries was closely bound up with the accommodation of our officers, which should be the best possible. He wondered if Sir N. O'Conor, whose death all deplored, would have lived longer, had he not been cooped up in Peking, in the quarters in which he (Mr. Rees) first saw him.

*MR. MORTON gladly recognised that on this Vote as a whole there was a reduction. He quite agreed with the remarks that had been made about the Embassy at Paris. That Embassy had always been a spoilt child for various reasons, because, he supposed, Paris used to be regarded as the centre of the world and of fashion. But now that France was a Republic and was endeavouring to lead a democratic life we might surely manage the Embassy on democratic lines, and more economically. He did not think the Embassy was much use any way. If one wanted them to do anything they did not do it, and if one was in Paris he had far better apply to the municipal authority, who would always put themselves out to oblige one. A good deal of criticism had been passed on these Estimates and the right hon. Gentleman had said last year he was endeavouring to bring about a better system. But these blunders were not confined to works in foreign countries; some of them occurred with regard to works in London itself. What happened in all public offices where it was easy to get and spend other people's money, was that a sort of Estimate was put before the House of Commons, which was thus persuaded to commit itself to the undertaking. Then the next year or the year after the Government came down and said they wanted more money, and the buildings having been commenced the House was driven to make additional grants. But considering that the officials who prepared these Estimates were properly paid, and the right hon. Gentleman was a practical man, he thought the gentlemen who got out the Estimates should be made responsible and should complete the buildings within the estimated sum. They had heard of cases where the Estimates had been made too low intentionally in order that the work might be started.

The DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN said that these were questions which could not be discussed on this Vote. The method of dealing with Votes in future had already been explained.

Mr. MORTON said they were talking about a special Vote.

Mr. DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: We are on a special Vote, but the hon. Member is talking about the general principles of estimating, instead of confining himself to the particular Vote.

*Mr. MORTON said he would confine himself to the items on the Paper before him. The item first spoken of was the original Estimate of £6,000 for the erection of a building at Cairo. The item on the Paper before them had now been revised, and was put down at £11,000.

The DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member is repeating arguments which have been already used on this Vote, and in regard to which an explanation has been given.

Mr. MORTON: I still hope that the right hon. Gentleman will adopt a better system in future.

*Mr. HARMOOD-BANNER (Liverpool, Everton) said an abbreviation had been made by the right hon. Gentleman against which he must enter his strongest protest, and that was as to his intention to omit in future any reference to new sites, and buildings, and works in connection therewith. He was referring to page 29, and the omission of £20,000 which was entered last year.

Mr. HARCOURT: I have explained that just now.

*Mr. HARMOOD-BANNER: The right hon. Gentleman had explained it in his way. He was not going to put in an Estimate for the acquisition of sites, but was going to to treat them as the subject of Supplementary Estimates at the end of the year, and that was what he ventured to protest against. It deceived the public, as it had already deceived the hon. Member for Sutherland, who had congratulated the Government on the Estimates being £20,000 less this year than they were last year, whereas the £20,000 which had been omitted was exactly the sum which the hon. Member said had been saved. It was a wonderful method of financing. If they allowed the method of Supplementary Estimates to pass without protest, the right hon. Gentleman might next year spend £150,000 on sites at Pekin, Abyssinia, and other outlandish places, and then could come and say, from the way the House treated it to-day, that they had accepted the principle that he was to go about the world purchasing sites on undivulged Estimates, and that they would give Supplementary Estimates to confirm the action he had adopted. He hoped his protest would be observed, because he trusted that it was not the usual character of Government proceedings to omit such items in order to show economy in their administration, and then to bring them in as Supplementary Estimates. It was rather a bad precedent, and he hoped they would hear that the Government would not omit this Estimate, but would now include a sufficient sum for next year. He quite admitted the principle that they must not disclose the sites they were going to acquire, but here they were giving a blank cheque to purchase property all over the world, to be dealt with in the form of a Supplementary Estimate. That was a proposal against which the House should protest, and should not accept in principle as regarded the future. Unionists were always being taunted by the other side with not being correct economists, but they had never done such an act as to omit an Estimate of importance, of such importance as to lead the hon. Member for Sutherland to think that it was an economy when it was not an economy. It was a concealment of expenditure which they certainly ought not to approve.

MR. ASHLEY said they were asked to vote £20,000 for the erection of an official residence at Addis Ababa. That was a large sum of money. Personally, he had every wish that the very distinguished diplomatist, Sir John Harrington, representing us, should have a proper house to live in. But there was, in his opinion, one great disadvantage—it was that the capital of Abyssinia was moved from one part of the country to another, perhaps to a place some 200 miles distant, and having spent £20,000 or £30,000 on a house, they might find that the expenditure was absolutely useless, owing to the diversion of the capital for a new one, settled upon by the Emperor of Abyssinia. That was well-known of the Abyssinian people, who were compelled to adopt the plan, because they had no fuel except wood. When all the wood was consumed, they moved the capital to some other part of the country. Therefore, he protested against sinking such a large sum of money in the present capital of Abyssinia, when they knew that very possibly in ten or fifteen years the money would be found to have been absolutely thrown away. No one grudged, he least of all, spending money on any reasonable accommodation that might be given Sir John Harrington, but he did not think they ought to enter upon an expenditure which in the long-run might mean the outlay of very much more money, because they might have to build another house when the capital was removed to another part of the country.

*MR. HARCOURT said he was in close communication with the Foreign Office and Sir John Harrington as to the advisability of building, as to the particular plans, as to the cost, and as to the necessity of erecting a house. But he could not put forward any views of his own, even if he had any, or if he had the special knowledge of Abyssinia possessed by the hon. Gentleman. But as against the views of the hon. Member, he had the knowledge possessed by Sir John Harrington and the Foreign Office, and he was obliged to take their information in the circumstances.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 28; Noes, 189. (Division List No. 67.)

AYES.

Ashley, W. W.
Balcarres, Lord
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Barrie, H. T. (Londonderry, N.)
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bull, Sir William James
Cave, George
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Du Cros, Arthur Philip
Duncan, Robert (Lanark, Govan
Fell, Arthur
Forster, Henry William
Hamilton Marquess of
Lane-Fox, G. R.
MacCaw, William J. MacGeagh
Pease, Herbert Pike (Darlington
Randles, Sir John Scurrah
Salter, Arthur Clavell
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Thomson, W. Mitchell- (Lanark)
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Valentia, Viscount
Younger, George

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Hicks Beach and Mr. Gibbs.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Adkins, W. Ryland D.
Agnew, George William
Allen, A. Acland (Christchurch)
Allen, Charles P. (Stroud)
Baker, Sir John (Portsmouth)
Balfour, Robert (Lanark)
Baring, Godfrey (Isle of Wight)
Barker, John
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Barnes, G. N.
Barry, Redmond J. (Tyrone, N.)
Beauchamp, E.
Bell, Richard
Benn, W. (T'w'r Hamlets, S. Geo.
Berridge, T. H. D.
Bethell, T. R. (Essex, Maldon)
Boland, John

Bowerman, C. W.
Branch, James
Brigg, John
Brodie, H. C.
Bryce, J. Annan
Buckmaster, Stanley O.
Burns, Rt. Hon. John
Buxton, Rt.Hn.Sydney Charles
Byles, William Pollard
Cameron, Robert
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Causton,Rt.Hn.RichardKnight
Cawley, Sir Frederick
Cherry, Rt. Hon. R. R.
Clancy, John Joseph
Cleland, J. W.
Clough, William
Corbett,C H(Sussex,E.Grinst'd
Cotton, Sir H. J. S.
Crean, Eugene
Crooks, William
Crosfield, A. H.
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, Ellis William (Eifion)
Davies, Timothy (Fulham)
Davies, W. Howell (Bristol, S.)
Delany, William
Devlin, Joseph
Dillon, John
Donelan, Captain A.
Duffy, William J.
Duncan, C. (Barrow-in-Furness
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)
Essex, R. W.
Esslemont, George Birnie
Everett, R. Lacey
Fiennes, Hon. Eustace
Fuller, John Michael F.
Gilhooly, James
Gill, A. H.
Glover, Thomas
Gooch, George Peabody (Bath
Grant, Corrie
Griffith, Ellis J.
Gurdon,Rt Hn.SirW.Brampton
Halpin, J.
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Lewis
Hardy, George A. (Suffolk)
Harmsworth, Cecil B. (Worc'r)
Harvey, A. G. C. (Rochdale)
Harvey,W.E.(Derbyshire,N.E.
Haslam, James (Derbyshire)
Haslam, Lewis (Monmouth)
Haworth, Arthur A.
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Henry, Charles S.
Higham, John Sharp
Hope,W.Bateman (Somerset,N
Horniman, Emslie John
Horridge, Thomas Gardner
Howard, Hon. Geoffrey
Hudson, Walter
Hyde, Clarendon
Jardine, Sir J.
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Jowett, F. W.
Joyce, Michael
Kekewich, Sir George
Kelley, George D.
Laidlaw, Robert
Lamont, Norman
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Lehmann, R. C.
Levy, Sir Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lough, Thomas
Lupton, Arnold
Macdonald, J. R. (Leicester)
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah (Down, S.
MacVeigh,Charles(Donegal,E.)
M'Callum, John M.
M'Crae, George
M'Micking, Major G.
Mallet, Charles E.
Marks,G.Croydon (Launceston)
Marnham, F. J.
Massie, J.
Meehan,Francis E.(Leitrim,N.)
Menzies, Walter
Micklem, Nathaniel
Middlebrook, William
Mond, A.
Montagu, E. S.
Mooney, J. J.
Morton, Alpheus Cleophas
Muldoon, John
Murray, James
Myer, Horatio
Napier, T. B.
Newnes, F. (Notts, Bassetlaw)
Nolan, Joseph
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nugent, Sir Walter Richard
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien,Kendal(Tipperary Mid
O'Doherty, Philip
O'Donnell, C. J. (Walworth)
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, James(Roscommon,N
O'Malley, William
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Parker, James (Halifax)
Partington, Oswald
Phillips, John (Longford, S.)
Price, C. E. (Edinb'gh, Central)
Priestley, Arthur (Grantham)
Priestley,W.E.B. (Bradford,E.)
Radford, G. H.
Rea, Russell (Gloucester)
Reddy, M.
Rees, J. D.
Richards, Thomas(W.Monm'th
Richards,T.F.(Wolverh'mpt'n
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roberts, G. H. (Norwich)
Robson, Sir William Snowdon
Roche, Augustine (Cork)
Roche, John (Galway, East)
Rowlands, J.
Runciman, Walter
Russell, T. W.
Samuel, Herbert L.(Cleveland)
Seddon, J.
Shackleton, David James
Shaw,Rt. Hon. T. (Hawick B.)
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Snowden, P.
Stanger, H. Y.
Stanley, Albert (Staffs, N. W.)
Stanley, Hn. A.Lyulph(Chesh.)
Stewart, Halley (Greenock)
Stewart-Smith, D. (Kendal)
Straus, B. S. (Mile End)
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Stuart, James (Sunderland)
Summerbell, T.
Thomas, David Alfred (Merthyr
Tomkinson, James
Torrance, Sir A. M.
Vivian, Henry
Wadsworth, J.
Walters, John Tudor
Ward,W. Dudley(Southampt'n
Waring, Walter
Wason,Rt.Hn.E (Clackmannan
Waterlow, D. S.
Watt, Henry A.
White, Sir George (Norfolk)
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire)
White, Luke (York, E.R.)
Whitley, John Henry (Halifax)
Whittaker, Sir Thomas Palmer
Wiles, Thomas
Wills, Arthur Walters
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid)
Wilson, J. H. (Middlesbrough)
Wilson, W. T. (Westhoughton)
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Whiteley and Mr. J. A. Pease.

And, it being after a quarter past Eight of the Clock, and leave having been given to move the Adjournment of the House under Standing Order No. 10, further proceeding was postponed without Question put.

MAIL STEAMERS AT KINGSTOWN.

MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT.

Mr. CLANCY (Dublin County, N.) said that in moving the adjournment of the House in order to call attention to the state of affairs that had resulted from the permission given to steamers of the London and North Western Railway Company to use Carlisle Pier, Kingstown, he trusted he might be allowed to state briefly his own position in the matter and to make it clear beyond doubt. His object was to prevent Dublin Harbour from being cheated, as he held it was being cheated, out of a sum of at least £5,000 a year, by the action of the Government. He desired in the second place to see fair play given to the Irish Steam Packet Company, and, in the third place, to say most emphatically that he had no objection whatever to a third service between England and Ireland by the Kingstown or Dublin route, provided it worked no such injustice to the Port of Dublin as that to which he had referred. He was in favour, in fact, of as many routes between England and Ireland as could be established under the conditions he had mentioned. Further he had no objection to the steamers of the London and North Western Railway Company sailing to Kingstown provided the result would not be to injure the Port of Dublin, and provided also that it would not involve an invasion of the legal rights of the Irish Steam Packet Company, and finally that it would not lead eventually, as he believed it would, to the creation of a monopoly in the hands of an English company, which, in his opinion, would be disastrous to the interests of Ireland. He had given notice of several Questions on the subject and they showed that the objects that he and, he believed, his hon. friends had in view, were those he had stated. He did not want to discuss the merits of the main question raised by the permission given to the London and North Western Railway Company to use the Port of Kingstown at a nominal charge, because he conceived that it was raised by the action which the City of Dublin Steam Packet Company had instituted. His contention was that the action of the Government, of which he most emphatically complained, amounted to prejudging that question, and to anticipating thereby the action of the Court a few days hence. It would, however, be necessary to give a short narrative of the facts, and he would state them with as little comment as possible. The London and North Western Railway Company had for many years been using the port of Dublin and berthing their steamers in the Liffey, and up to 1902 had used rules of measurement in such a way that they reduced the registered tonnage of their vessels very considerably by what was, in his opinion, a trick. He felt all the more free to use that language, because in 1902 the Port and Docks Board in Dublin came to Parliament with a Bill which proposed to put a stop to that practice of the London and North Western Railway Company. That Bill passed into law and enacted that the harbour authority in Dublin might fix a certain scale of dues. They did so, and every company, he understood, got six years, from 1902 to the present year, to prepare for the change. Every company fell in with the new arrangement except the London and North Western Railway Company, who, when they found they could not alter the views of the Dublin Port and Docks Board, had sought, and successfully up to the present, to evade payment of a portion of those dues. The means they had resorted to were these. They went to the Government and asked them for leave to use the Government Harbour at Kingstown for 5s. a trip, and the Government—whether they knew all the antecedent circumstances or not he did not know—set up their own harbour, maintained out of the taxes of the public, as a competitor with the commercial harbour of Dublin. In other words they allowed the London and North Western Railway Company, one of the richest commercial corporations in the three kingdoms, if not in the world, to compete unfairly with the struggling Irish Steam Packet Company, and allowed them also to make use of their Government harbour at the expense of £5,000 a year to the poverty-stricken harbour of Dublin. That was a sample, and only a sample he regretted to say, of the mean and selfish preference given to English commercial interests. He did not want to comment upon the facts at all, because they were *sub judice*, but the City of Dublin Steam Packet Company, thinking it had a right to the exclusive use of the Carlisle Pier after fifty years, presented, he supposed, after vainly remonstrating with the Government, a Petition of Right to the King. As every lawyer knew, that Petition of Right must have been examined by the Attorney-General. It could not come as a suit before a Court of Justice unless the Attorney-General certified that there was a real *bona fide* question of law to be argued. The petition then went forward and came as an ordinary action at law before the High Court in London. The contention of the City of Dublin Steam Packet Company might be correct and well-founded, but the point he raised was the action of the Government in prejudging the question before it had been tried in the High Court. In order to prevent any such prejudging of the case the City of Dublin Steam Packet Company applied for an injunction to restrain the Government from continuing this permission until the question of law had been settled, and it came before the High Court on the 26th ult. and it was refused. He thought he was not incorrect in saying that the reason why the Judge refused an injunction immediately was that he understood that the action was to be tried at once. More than that the Judge said it was an urgent matter. But the Crown applied for an adjournment till 31st March, and when 31st March came they were not ready and they applied for another adjournment till 7th April. Now he understood the Crown would not be ready on 7th April, and that the action had been set down as late as 29th April. Every delay that had taken place in the matter had been due to the action of the law officers of the Crown. Under these circumstances was it not too bad to give an answer in the House of Commons as if it were all-sufficient that when on 26th March an injunction was applied for it was refused? It was refused because the Judge understood the trial was to come on on 31st March, and that the London and North Western steamers were not to go to Carlisle Pier until 1st April. He did not like to make a personal charge and he hoped the Attorney-General would not understand him as doing so, but it looked as if someone misled the Judge—at all events as if the Judge acted upon stated facts which did not exist. Surely the usual practice in these matters was to delay action until the question of law was decided. He admitted at once that if this were a frivolous action, if it were known universally that there was no substance behind it and that the question of law was a mere bogus question, the action of the Government might be justified. But that excuse was taken away by what he had mentioned. Under these circumstances and seeing that the Attorney-General had certified that there was a real *bona fide* question of law involved, he held that it was a monstrous thing for the Government to anticipate the judgment of the Court by allowing the London and North Western steamers to go to this pier, with regard to the use of which the Dublin Steam Packet Company had challenged them to prove their right. The worst of the matter was that they need not break their contract, if they had made a contract, with the London and North Western Railway Company. No hardship would be done to that company by their being prevented from going to the Carlisle Pier; they could go to the Victoria Wharf where he had seen hundreds and thousands of soldiers embarking from the ship's side on to the quay. Under these circumstances there could not be any hardship. He had no objection to the London and North Western Company going even to Kingstown, provided they did not thereby rob the Port of Dublin. He believed the London and North Western Company by one of their Acts had the power to go into Dublin or Kingstown, but whenever they went to Kingstown or Howth they were to pay dues equal to those they were paying in Dublin. If that was true the Government were conniving at a violation of an Act of Parliament. But he challenged the Attorney-General to say whether what he had stated was a fact. If it was not, any argument he had based upon it fell to the ground. If it was true he repeated that the Government were conniving at the violation of an Act of Parliament, in the interest of an English commercial company, and to the prejudice of an Irish port. He begged to move.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."—(*Mr. Clancy.*)

MR. MOONEY repudiated the idea that their interest in this debate was the interest of a private company. He was of the opinion that Kingstown ought never to come under the control of a private company, and it was for that reason they challenged the action of the

Government who, by that action, they submitted were prejudging the case, and attempting to create a monopoly in favour of a particular company. They would like to see far more traffic than there was in Kingstown, and instead of trying to keep the London and North Western Railway Company out they would like to see other companies come in. But they held that the public interest, the safety of the mail service, and the convenience of the public ought to be considered, and submitted that by their action the Treasury had acted in a manner calculated to create a prejudice in favour of one of the parties in the action now pending before the Court. They held also that the Treasury had prejudiced the speedy carrying of the mails, the safety of the ships, and the comfort of the passengers. He wanted to know who it was that gave orders to arrest the porter. The superintendent must have been acting under the orders of somebody. Who gave those orders, and who gave the authority to the police to take action which was prejudicial to the case now before the Court? The Chief Secretary knew nothing about it. The Treasury and the Postmaster-General knew nothing about it. On whose authority did the harbour authorities at Kingstown refuse to clear the way for the Royal Mail steamer that morning? Why was the launch not there on the previous day? It was a curious commentary that while the harbour launch refused to clear the way for the Royal Mail steamer she was in attendance and cleared the way for the London and North Western boat. Was that the action of the Treasury? The first duty of the Treasury was not to provide monopoly terms for any individual company, but to provide that the mails were carried in the best and safest manner. The other point he wished to take was this. When they were told, as they were told, that Mr. Justice Eve refused the injunction, he (Mr. Mooney) remarked that what was before Mr Justice Eve was that the London and North Western Railway Company could not use the harbour before 1st April. The application was made on 25th March and the learned Judge put it down for 31st March. It was then pointed out that the Attorney-General could not conveniently attend, and it was again postponed until 29th April. The delays had taken place to meet the wishes of the Crown and not those of the Steam Packet Company. Their complaint was that the case of the company was undoubtedly prejudiced in the public mind. The Government, by their action, seemed to be taking the part of one side. To bring into play the Vice-Admiral and the Dublin Metropolitan Police, and to use them for one party against the other was distinctly to prejudice the case to be heard on the Petition of Right. The London and North Western Company under the Act of 1868, had a right to use the harbour. But was there no other place in the harbour? There was the Victoria Wharf to which they could go without inconvenience. That wharf was used for the landing of troops, it was used for the landing of the Queen the last time she went to Ireland, and it was also the place at which the King landed. There was very strong ground for complaint against the authorities for taking sides against the City of Dublin Steam Packet Company and with the London and North-Western. When the Dublin Port and Docks Board Bill was before the House, the London and North Western Company came before the Committee and objected, but the Bill was passed notwithstanding, and the London and North-Western Company were now attempting to get behind the decision of the Committee and of both Houses of Parliament.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Sir W. ROBSON, South Shields) said he did not propose to enter into any question on the merits of the case or as to the conduct of the Government in allowing the London and North Western Railway Company to go to Kingstown Harbour. That was a question as to which, for anything he knew, there might be a great deal to be said, but it was not a question which came within the terms of the Motion. It was not a question on which he possessed any information, nor was it one on which he was authorised to speak. The facts were these: A Petition of Right was presented to the King, and before it came on for hearing the suppliants, the Packet Company, asked for certain interim relief. What they asked for was an expression of opinion from the Court which would have the effect of preventing, or would indicate to the Government that it ought to prevent, the use of the pier by the London and North Western Railway Company as from 1st April until the case was heard. They further asked for any other relief that might be proper in the circumstances. The substance of the application was that it invited an expression of opinion from the Court upon which the Government might act. The application was not made so early as it might have been, as the controversy had reached an acute stage before the petition was presented. There was an announcement in the Dublin papers on 14th February that the London and North Western Railway intended to run their steamers to the pier, and the Packet Company took no action until 17th March when the petition was presented, and shortly after the Packet Company gave notice of application for an interim injunction. That application was heard on the 25th, and the Company said they could not efficiently carry out their contract to carry the mails unless they were granted some relief. The learned Judge heard all the arguments on the application and gave judgment, and it was not true that the application was summarily disposed of. It was fully heard and adjudicated upon. He listened with surprise to the statement of the hon. Member that the Judge refused the application because he understood there was to be an early trial. The Judge knew perfectly well that the trial could not take place before 1st April, and there was not the slightest foundation for saying that the Judge was actuated by any such reason in giving judgment. He gave judgment on the merits of the application and not on any suggestion that there was to be an early trial.

The Judge said—

> "In my opinion the suppliant Company have not made out such a case as entitles me to interfere either by granting an injunction or by expressing the opinion which I have been invited to express."

Hon. Members would see that that was a very important factor in the case. Later, the Judge went on—

> "I say frankly that if there were a case where, in my opinion, the burden cast upon the suppliant Company was being unreasonably increased, and certainly if it were a case where danger to life was involved, I should have no hesitation in expressing any opinion which would have assisted the suppliant Company in preserving the *status quo* until the petition has been disposed of. But, taking the view I do of the evidence, I think it falls far short of making out any such case as that. It undoubtedly does show, for the purpose of carrying out this contract, manœuvres and work would have to be done which hitherto the suppliant Company has not had to do. But beyond that it does not appear to me that it will inflict, or that it is calculated to inflict, any such injustice on the suppliant Company as to call for my interference at this stage of the proceedings. I, therefore, can make no Order, and express no opinion, as invited by Par. 1 of the Notice of Motion."

And then Mr. Justice Eve went on to say—

> "With regard to the alternative relief claimed in the Motion, so far as the Court is concerned, any day which is convenient to the supliant Company and the Crown can be appropriated."

What then took place? In behalf of the Crown he told the Court that he was very anxious to meet his learned friend, Sir Robert Finlay, with regard to the suggestion for an early and expeditious trial. He had no desire to delay the trial, and he discussed with Sir Robert Finlay in Court what day could be fixed. Of course, hon. Members would recognise that he could have got an adjournment on the ground that he had had no time to read the affidavits. He, however, made no such application, but discussed partly in the hearing of the Court and partly in the way of a private conversation with Sir Robert Finlay to what day it was possible to fix the adjournment. In the hearing of the Court he said that he was engaged every day except one, which he mentioned to Sir R. Finlay, but that he would put aside these fixed engagements provided he got leave of the Court to do so, and that the other side should have the earliest day possible. That was left by the Court to be arranged between Sir Robert Finlay and himself. Unfortunately, immediately after that the harbour-master, the principal witness for the Crown, fell ill, and in order to prevent delay, to his very great regret, he came to the conclusion that it would be better to take his evidence by commission, so that so far as expedition was concerned he was quite sure that hon. Gentlemen opposite would say there was no evidence of anything like a desire for delay. There had been no delay, and so far as they were concerned there would be no delay. The case was an appeal by the City of Dublin Steam Packet Company, by way of petition. The petition was presented and it proved to be a most remarkable claim on the part of the company. It was a claim that although there was no contract for the exclusive user of the port on their part and no restrictions, yet that they had by some amplification, which was not very clearly expressed, by some mysterious grant acquired the right to the exclusive user of the pier. The Packet Company added that that claim should be held as *prima facie* evidence to this extent, that as they had for fifty years employed this user, the London and North-Western Company should not be allowed to share that pier until after the hearing. That application was refused. The Court had full knowledge that 1st April might come and go, and the Judge said that the trial might not take place until after that date. He argued that the Packet Company had not shown a sufficient case for anything in the nature of an interim injunction which they applied for, and he pointed out that the Postmaster-General was as anxious as the City of Dublin Steam Packet Company not to interfere with that service. He further pointed out that in relation to this very point they had expert and authoritative advice, and that it was not to be supposed, if the London and North Western Company on 1st April came in for partial user of the pier it would be of any kind of use to the Postal Service. The Packet Company came into Court and their application was dismissed. What had they done? Had they obeyed the law? Had they decided to wait until the claim should be tried, whatever the result might be? Not at all. The Packet Company did not obey the law. The very people who came to the House and accused the Government of pre-judging the case had slighted and disregarded the law in a manner which, in a great commercial company of that kind, he could only describe as deplorable. It was very unusual to find this course being adopted by a Steam Mail Packet Company, having been told by the learned Judge that he would grant them no interim injunction. What was their duty? To obey the orders of the harbour master. The harbour master, in pursuance of his duty, and in exercise of his rights, proceeded to make arrangements for the user of the pier by the London and North Western Company; but the Packet Company refused to obey his orders. There was a daring, at all events a complete, defiance of the proper powers of the harbour master. Yet their friends came to that House and complained that the Government were pre-judging the case because they were compelled to obey the orders of the constituted authority. It had been said by the seconder of the Motion that the Government refused to allow the Dublin Steam Packet Company to use the harbour, and that there was very nearly an accident. He had received a telegram from Dublin in relation to that question. The person who sent the information was the proper person to do so.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Lough, N.): The very fellow who is on trial.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: The brother of the Treasury Remembrancer.

SIR W. ROBSON: Oh, I am on my trial.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: We will find you "not guilty."

SIR W. ROBSON said that the telegram had been received from Sir George Holmes, the proper person to send it. He would read what was said and then they could discuss it as much as hon. Gentlemen pleased. It was said—

> "This morning a collier was about to leave the harbour at the time when a mail steamer was due to leave. The collier was warned, but proceeded and the mail steamer had to stop. The delay was slight but a summons was taken out against the collier.

That might or might not be a fact, it might be a little scrap of fiction telegraphed over to this country.

MR. MOONEY said that all he did was to ask the Postmaster-General whether he had received a telegram to that effect, and he did not think it was fair to say that he made a statement of fact which was not a fact at all.

Sir W. ROBSON said he was attributing a little accuracy to Sir George Holmes and there was no ground for the suggestion that there was any collision on the part of the Government in regard to the matter. It was said that the Government had been delaying litigation, but it was not the case, as they were doing their best to expedite it. The Dublin Steam Packet Company had, it seemed to him, been guilty of a most grave and lamentable disregard of the law, and the House would be ill-advised under such circumstances if it passed the Resolution.

*Mr. T. M. HEALY said he hoped the hon. and learned Attorney-General, who enjoyed the confidence of the House, would not suppose they were impeaching his action or throwing a shadow of blame upon him. There was, however, one remark in the hon. and learned Gentleman's speech which he regretted, and that was that in the attack which he made upon the Dublin Steam Packet Company he seemed to think that those who came forward on that occasion were the friends and representatives of that Company and the opponents of the London and North Western Railway Company. He had been criticising the Dublin Steam Packet Company all his life, and he had, to a great extent, often defended the London and North-Western Railway Company, because anybody who had crossed from England to Ireland, or *vice versa*, during the last thirty years must feel under a boundless obligation to the London and North Western Railway Company for the personal civility of every man connected with it, from the highest to the lowest; and the notion that they had come there to assail that Company, and as the advocates of the Dublin Steam Packet Company, was quite an erroneous view. They did not come there as friends and representatives of the Steam Packet Company, but they came forward because they conceived that there was a glaring injustice done to an Irish Company and not caring whether it was a Conservative or a Liberal Company. It was an Irish Company, and it was as such that they were defending it. He wished to make it perfectly clear that if the London and North Western Railway Company had come into Kingstown Harbour in a proper and regular manner, he believed they would have been welcomed by that harbour, and he thought they were entitled to fair facilities for coming, and not one word that he uttered would be in depreciation of them, or used with a view of taking one side or the other. That was not their position, and he believed if the London and North Western Railway Company had got this concession from the Treasury in a proper and regular manner that every man in the House would have rejoiced. As far as they had been permitted to know the facts, as far as they had been able to open the local shutter of the Treasury for about the millionth part of a second, which was all the exposure they could get, the facts were these. He was not taking the side of the Port and Docks Board of Dublin. On the contrary, he believed that the London and North-Western Railway Company had not been fairly treated by that Board. What he complained of was that in one of the most delicate transactions affecting local life in Dublin the Treasury had thrown their sword into the scale to the damage of a local institution. As far as he understood the facts were these; for very many years the shippers of the three Kingdoms had an advantage over the port authorities. He remembered very well about twenty years ago, when the shipping interest was very strong in this House, a Grand Committee sat upstairs, and nobody that was not a shipowner could get listened to at all, and they prepared an Act of Parliament by which they "cheated the measurement" of the tonnage of vessels and thereby sent their ships into the various ports of the Kingdom, comparatively paying little or nothing for them, thereby diminishing to an enormous extent the dues which the port authorities received. The London and North Western Railway Company was in a very peculiar position, because by its passenger steamers there were scarcely any goods carried, and by its cargo steamers there were scarcely any passengers carried. It had to have three or four passenger steamers get into the dock every day, and consequently they constructed ships by which they ran a coach-and-four through the Act of Parliament. He did not blame the London and North Western Railway Company for trying to cut down their tonnage dues. But for the last twenty years the provisions in favour of the shipping interest of the three Kingdoms were found to be too unfavourable to port authorities, and had been repealed, first by private legislation with regard to the different ports around the coast, and then, he thought, a public Act was passed. But gradually, whether by private or public Act of Parliament, the ports got the better of the shipowners and were enabled to get a change in the measurement of tonnage, whereby a larger sum was extracted from the shipowners than hitherto, and the payment of a greater sum of port dues became necessary. The Dublin Port and Docks Board, a body with which they had not the least sympathy—at least he had not, and he had tried to reform it again and again, but in vain—began undoubtedly to squeeze the London and North Western Railway Company, and to extract from them, so to speak, the last drop of their blood. In so doing they declared they were legally advised that they had no option save to enforce the maximum dues. Still he did not hold with the port authority of Dublin in trying to put this pressure upon the London and North Western Railway Company, but what did the Railway Company do? Under pressure of these exactions they thought of their contribution from the Treasury, granted years ago for their accelerated mail service, £4,000—[A NATIONALIST MEMBER: £6,000]—Well, £4,000, £5,000, or £6,000. He would say £6,000, and if he was wrong in the amount it was not his fault. If this had referred to Zululand they would have had a Blue-book about it. Immediately these astute men, because the men who conducted the great railways were almost as able as the Gentlemen who sat on the Treasury Bench, saw they could make their own advantage and get rid of this Dublin exaction, and get their ships into Ireland cheaper by dropping the gratuity from the Treasury, for what was called acceleration, and at once informed the Treasury Remembrancer of Dublin, who was the brother of the head of the Board of Works which control Kingstown Harbour. That was the gentleman who went down into the kitchen and cellars of Dublin Castle, and other places, and inspected the coals and the cat's meat, and saw whether he could cut down expenses. These gentlemen cut down a messenger boy's salary from 5s. 6d. to 4s. 6d., with the result that a couple of hundred a year afterwards was added to their own. They said to him: "We will let you off this £4,000 or £5,000 if you will let us come into Kingstown free." Mr. Holmes, who cared no more about Ireland than he (Mr. Healy) cared about Roumania, who was one of those men who were only looking out for a C.B. or some other honour, saw he could make a deal, and said to himself that he would be a big man at the Treasury if he made this bargain with the London and North Western Railway by which the English taxpayers were let off whatever the sum was for the acceleration of the mails, and he made the bargain and the Railway Company deprived the Port of Dublin of the dues they should receive, and was allowed to come in free to the great harbour of Kingstown, which had cost the people something like £1,000,000. Why should the Port of Dublin be denuded of its dues from the London and North Western Railway Company because of some bargain which they struck with the Treasury. For that petty concession the Railway Company had conceded to the Treasury that which was granted by the Treasury for the carriage of the mails. Let the House remember that the extraordinary thing about Ireland was that when new men came into office they entirely forgot the continuity of policy. Was there a man on the Treasury Bench who remembered Mr Gladstone's action in 1883? Lord Richard Grosvenor was then the Chief Whip of the Liberal Party, a very faithful Whip to Mr. Gladstone. He was now Lord Stalbridge and Chairman of the London and North Western Railway Company. Mr. Gladstone sealed and signed a contract with that Company taking away *in toto* this mail contract trom the Dublin Steam Packet Company. The

Irish Members without exception signed a memorial to Mr. Gladstone, and said that this was a poor Irish Company. It had had the carriage of the mails for fifty years, the shareholders were generally widows, parsons and small traders—he could assure the House that none of his friends had any shares in it—and the result was that Mr. Gladstone with the peculiar sense he had of public opinion, whether it was English or Irish, said to Lord Richard Grosvenor: "Let us defer to Irish opinion." Lord Grosvenor, to his eternal credit, although it was signed and sealed tore up the contract and gave back the mail contract to this little Company. That was the act of the Liberals in 1883. They seemed to have travelled as far from 1883 in the matter of liberality, as they had from Mr. Gladstone in the case of Home Rule. To gain £4,000 or £5,000 for the English Treasury the Port of Dublin was deprived of a much bigger sum in dues. They welcomed the London and North-Western Railway into Kingstown, but why should the Packet Company be inconvenienced? That company could surely take its steamers to the pier where the King went. The King went twice to the Victoria Pier, and Queen Victoria went once to the Victoria Pier. Were they now to be told that the pier that was good enough for Royalty, for Kings and Queens was not good enough for the third class passengers of the London and North Western Railway. The case was this, there was the Carlisle Pier at which the Packet Company had been in the habit of mooring their ships. He did not know much about nautical affairs, but he understood that these ships must, at a particular time of the day when they came in, damp down their fires to get their tubular boilers cleaned, and to swing round, and that unless they had the entire use of this pier they could not, as they said, carry out their service efficiently. But there was more than that in it. Let the House remember that this mail service between England and Ireland was the one thing in the British connection of which they might be proud, and accordingly they wished to do away with it. One could travel as regularly from England to Ireland as he could come down to the House in a cab from the Strand. They could travel to the minute, the day, the hour, and why? Because in the days when there were statesmen in the land who, instead of building "Dreadnoughts" thought it wiser to build great passenger vessels, and more of maintaining commercial supremacy by that means than by shotted guns, the House voted £50,000 a year to maintain the service between England and Ireland. They could go back almost forty years in *Hansard*, and they would find speeches by Gladstone, Sir Robert Peel, and other great men upon this question of the mail service between England and Ireland. It was not until the Government took up with South Africa, and Woolloomooloo and all those great foreign places, that Ireland ceased to be of consideration to the House and Irish affairs ceased to be of interest. Great English statesmen in those days did not disdain to examine these small domestic questions which affected the lives of the Irish people. Now that they had to look after New Zealand and Jerusalem and Macedonia and all these other foreign places the Irish case was entirely neglected. What did they now propose? Mr. Gladstone's contract was made in 1883 and went up to 1893, when a fresh contract was made for twenty years. There was only a short time for this contract to run; and accordingly, with that eye for futurity which the gentlemen who looked after the cash-box so generally had, they wanted to rob Ireland of this little service. He knew the Treasury too well. What they were thinking about was something to help the "All Red" route to Canada. He called it the "all rot" route. They were looking for some foreign cows with long horns. They were looking for some route that would take them across the Equator or the North Pole or some other interesting part of the world and the idea was, that the Irish were not quite so watchful as they might have been and that this million of money that was given for twenty years was entirely too much—it was going to the Irish. The great thing would be to get it for the people in Vancouver, who paid no contribution to Imperial taxation. "Our Imperial souls, they said "are distending, and we cannot see anything nearer than Vancouver," and, accordingly, the Treasury were making, in this business, a reconnaissance in force. The first thing to do was to jostle the Irish company out of Carlisle pier and bring in the London and North Western Company. Possibly the London and North Western Company would do this business rippingly and slappingly for five years for £5,000. The Irish company would be dead and wound up and there would be nobody left to compete in five years, and then the London and North Western Railway Company would talk to them. Let him remind the Postmaster-General what his predecessor Mr. Arnold Morley did when he was in office in 1893 when this contract was to expire. Mr. Sexton, then a prominent Member of the Irish Party, himself, and others of the Irish Party spent hours and days with Mr. Arnold Morley trying to devise something when the contract ran out that would keep this little company on its legs, and trying to do something not only to maintain the credit of the Post Office, but also this great international route. What they had to complain of was not of the Government's interfering with this question of the Petition of Right. It went deeper than that. It went really to the relations between the two countries, to the way in which Irish affairs were regarded by the Treasury. It was really part of the great case between Ireland versus England, that was their grievance. He did not know whether this company acted violently and illegally or not, and he was sorry to hear the Attorney-General, who was generally so scrupulous in giving an opinion, prejudge that matter. He did not know whether English Judges read the newspapers, he presumed they did not. He presumed that the Judge before whom the hon. Gentleman would appear would not read what he said in this House. Nobody ever did, nowadays, and so the Judge would not have read the statement of the hon. Gentleman, that this company had acted in an illegal manner. Therefore he would pass from that to the action of the Chief Secretary in lending the police to help one party to the dispute. He could only say that a very bad example had been given to the people in that country by reason of the attitude of the police and officials in Dublin. What was the conclusion of the whole matter? What the London and North Western Railway Company wanted was to get better terms out of the Port of Dublin. He believed that they had not been well treated by the Port and Docks Board, and that they were fully entitled to better terms. The London and North Western Railway Company could not in one sense leave the Port of Dublin. They had built a magnificent hotel there, and all their plant was at the North Wall. So far as the London and North Western Railway Company were concerned, he believed their entry upon Kingstown was only tactics and manœuvres. If he was right, was it not deplorable that the Treasury, in order to gain some mean and paltry advantage in England, should have lent themselves to injuring Dublin, and interfered in a struggle of this kind? He thought they had good ground for raising the whole question. It was symptomatic of the state of Ireland and of the treatment which Irish affairs received from the Treasury. He believed the time would come very soon when they would have to have a steadier method of checking the action of the Treasury, so that, whether by way of a Standing Select Committee or a separate Committee on Public Accounts for Ireland, or by some other means, the Gentlemen who joined the Treasury as apprentices, and who a day or two afterwards wanted to become great statesmen by showing a saving on Irish accounts, could be brought more readily to book.

Mr. MOORE (Armagh, N.) said he wished to say a few words as a representative of the North of Ireland. The efficiency of the services which connected the two countries had been proved again and again by experience to depend upon the existence of competition, and the best services were those which the London and North Western Railway Company ran in competition with rival routes. He associated himself with the apprehensions of the hon. and learned Member for North Louth that the real object and final result in a few years of this manœuvre on the part of that company would be absolutely to extinguish competition between Kingstown and England, and he believed it would be a very disastrous thing for Ireland. Every additional passenger service across the Channel was another bond of connection between the two countries and made for the commercial development and improvement of Ireland, and it would be a matter of regret to anyone interested in the welfare of that country if one of those services were wiped out. It was because he thought this link of competition in the direct service from London to Dublin was threatened by the action of the London and North Western Railway Company that he intended to vote for the Resolution. He thought the remarks made by the Attorney-General were over-critical. He could not see that the strictures which he passed upon the action of the City of Dublin Steam Packet Company were in any way justified from the legal point of view. As he understood the case, the company had possession of the pier for the purpose of their mail business under a licence from that branch of the Government represented by the Post Office and, being in possession of a licence under the Government, they went to an English Court and asked it to restrain the trespass and invasion of their rights by this foreign company, which it was true fortified themselves on the same ground of the grant of a licence. He could quite understand a Judge saying the granter was the Government and solvent, and it was not a matter for an interim injunction. They could carry on the business, with some inconvenience probably, but still without sufficient inconvenience to paralyse them, and he would leave the matter until the trial of the point at issue. It was not as if the London and North Western Railway Company had obtained an injunction preventing, under their licence, the Steam Packet Company interfering with them. If they had done that the Steam Packet Company would have flouted the authority of the Court and been guilty of contempt. Up to that time the London and North Western Railway Company had been so timid about the licence they claimed from another branch of the Government that they had not gone to the English Court at all for an injunction, and yet the Attorney-General had denounced the company as if the London and North Western Railway Company had obtained an injunction. He concurred with the opinion of the hon. Member for North Louth that it would be better if, while matters were *sub judice*, censure from the head of the English Bar and counsel in the case were not passed upon the action of either of the litigants. In the interests of the competition, which was vital to the maintenance of the excellence of the route, he would vote on this occasion with the hon. Members below the gangway.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL said that in 1902 the Manx Company asked for the same privilege with regard to the Carlisle Pier as had now been given to the London and North Western Railway Company. The Steamship Packet Company very much opposed that, on the ground of its interference with the mails, and also on the ground of their user of the pier being interfered with. Their objection prevailed, and the Manx Company did not get the privilege. What was the difference between the Manx Company and the London and North Western Company? He would never forget the scene created in the House when Mr. Hanbury, speaking from the Treasury Bench as the representative of the Government, said that it was hard to see when public interest ended and private interest began. The Manx Company had not the advantages of the London and North-Western Company. They had not a chairman who was for years a Treasury Whip. They had not a directorate including no fewer than four peers, of whom one was a duke, four sons of peers, two Members of the House of Commons, and a brewer. Could that be the reason for the difference? Of course not! The Attorney-General had alluded to Sir George Holmes. The London and North Western Railway Company was his *alma mater*. Sir George began life and was educated as an engineer.

*MR. SPEAKER: An account of the life of Sir George Holmes is wholly irrelevant. The hon. Member must speak to the Motion before the House.

MR. T. M. HEALY: It is very interesting.

*MR. SPEAKER: Perhaps the hon. Member will write an account of it.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL said Sir George Holmes began life as an engineer in the company.

*THE SPEAKER: I must ask the hon. Member to observe my ruling.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL said he would not say another word about it. There was a contract between the Manx Company which was refused and the London and North Western Company, which was granted the privilege. For the gain of a few hundreds to the Imperial Treasury this very severe loss might be sustained by an Irish Company to the benefit of an English Company, and above all the means of communication between England and Ireland might be impaired. He would be glad to hear from the Chief Secretary some account of the way in which he regarded the matter. His hon. friend had not yet told him what he had twice asked him. Under what authority were large posses of police brought down to Carlisle Pier on the previous night when the right hon. Gentleman knew nothing about it? It was done in the interests of a private company as against a public right and they ought to have some explanation of that.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. BIRRELL, Bristol, N.): I think it is realised that my connection with this matter is of the very slightest. What we know about it is that this Carlisle Pier at Kingstown, which many of us know only too well, was on the 1st April the scene of a considerable amount of rivalry between two very powerful companies—the City of Dublin Steam Packet Company and the London and North Western Railway Company, each struggling for berths for their great steamers. Each of those companies have, as we know, followers of their own—men in their own service each eager to support the case of the Company who employs him. I do not think therefore it is at all an unreasonable thing that persons anxious to maintain peace in the harbour, which is peculiarly unsuited for anything like a struggle, should look to it that there was a sufficient police force. With the single exception to which I have alluded, the police took no part whatever in this matter. They cannot be accused of being partisans or of having anything to do with the merits of this very complicated dispute. They simply stood by and did nothing, but their presence was supposed to prevent anything like a breach of the peace. I personally regret that in one case a porter was arrested, and, as I have already told the House, on hearing that he had been placed in custody, I immediately telegraphed that he should be released. Fortunately he was not in custody. He was on bail, and after protracted legal inquiry before a magistrate, which no doubt he thoroughly enjoyed, he was subjected to a fine of 40s. in order to enable him to appeal, but the fine was reduced to 1s. in case he did not avail himself of that legal privilege. I certainly regret very much that anybody should have been arrested, for, after all, obeying an order. I quite feel that that case was a departure from the rule. Otherwise the police, I am informed, behaved with perfect composure and took part in no way whatever in this affair, or expressed sympathy with one side or the other. My hon. friend asks me who informed the police that it was possible a disturbance might arise. That is a fair question. I am told the information came from Mr. Stevenson, who is a Commissioner of Public Works. He informed the police that it was quite possible that there would be a breach of peace, and accordingly the police who, naturally on an occasion of that sort, would not communicate with me, being satisfied that the request was made in good faith, sent a sufficient force to preserve order which I dare say would not have been broken if they had not been there. In these matters nobody can be expected to run any risks. I think, therefore, the House will apprehend that in the situation at the harbour—rivalry between the companies, great steamers coming and going, animated men anxious in one case to delay the steamer from leaving its moorings, and in the other case anxious to assist it to do so—disturbance might very possibly have arisen. The police were demanded and they were there. Now I trust we will hear no more.

MR. MOONEY: Can the right hon. Gentleman say, was the porter arrested for committing an act that might lead to a breach of the peace.

MR. BIRRELL: We shall have a full account of the protracted proceedings before the magistrate. The charge made against him was, I believe, that he had obstructed the assistant harbour master in the discharge of his duty by loosening a hawser from a bollard on the pier. That was the charge preferred by the assistant harbour master, and that was the matter tried before the magistrate.

MR. CLANCY: The debate having answered the object which my hon. friends and myself had in view, and no Minister—and I say this with some deliberation—having risen to defend the trick by which the Port of Dublin has been deprived of £5,000 a year, I ask leave to withdraw the Motion.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

SUPPLY.

Postponed Proceeding on Question, "That a sum, not exceeding £52,400 (including a Supplementary sum of £13,000 be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1909, for Expenditure in respect of Diplomatic and Consular Buildings and for the maintenance of certain Cemeteries Abroad," resumed.

Question again proposed.

SIR F. BANBURY asked for an explanation of two items in the Vote. The first was for the enlargement and adaptation of Madame Martini's house. He wanted to know who Madame Martini was and why her house had been adapted at an expense of £6,950, of which £4,950 had already been spent and £2,000 was put down for this year. There was also an item of £14,000 for the erection of a new Consulate at Port Said. That was a new Vote and £2,000 was supposed to be required for it this year. He wanted to ask two or three questions upon that. He first wanted to know why it was necessary to erect a new Consulate at Port Said. He presumed there had been a Consulate at Port Said for many years. He did not grudge the Consul at Port Said proper accommodation, but as he had apparently been there for a great number of years and had existed during those years, as far as he knew without inconvenience to himself or the business which he carried out, why was this £14,000 suddenly required to be expended? In view of what had taken place earlier in the evening too, he would like to know whether this was merely a sketch Vote which would probably next year be enlarged, or whether it might be more or less adhered to. There was also an item for rebuilding the Consulate at Nagasaki and the original estimate was given as three noughts. He did not know what that meant.

*MR. HARCOURT: £5,000. The five is accidentally omitted.

SIR F. BANBURY said there appeared to be something unfortunate with regard to the printing of the Estimates this year, because the Memorandum which ought to have been circulated on 7th March was not presented until that morning. He had been, through the courtesy of the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, given an advance copy about ten days ago, but that he thought was only because he happened to make some observations about it in the House of Commons. He had no wish to be put in a favoured position or to obtain an advantage over his fellow Members on that side of the House. He must ask the right hon. Gentleman if he would investigate the matter of the printing in order to ensure that in the future the proper figures were put in and that the Memorandum was circulated as the proper date and not at the last moment. At the same time, he hoped that would not prevent him having the privilege of an advance copy if any were given to Members on that side of the House.

*MR. HARCOURT said the prosperity of Port Said was increasing, and it was considered advisable to rebuild the Consulate there. The hon. Member had complained that this item had appeared suddenly in the Estimates. Any item that was new must appear suddenly. The establishment of a new Consulate was necessary at Port Said because there was a larger population there than the hon. Baronet seemed to imagine. The hon. Baronet had asked a question about the wages, but he thought it would be better if at a later date he gave him a schedule of the wages after it had been translated into our currency. The Memorandum circulated by the Treasury did not concern him, although he was glad that the hon. Baronet had managed to get a copy before he did. He regretted that in the hon. Baronet's copy a blunder occurred in one of the figures.

MR. ASHLEY said that in reference to the Consulate at Port Said he could not regard the right hon. Gentleman's answer as satisfactory. The percentage of British vessels going through Port Said was less than it was ten years ago, and he was afraid that the trade of that port was not increasing. The increased trade to Egypt went almost entirely through Alexandria, and the amount certainly seemed a large sum to spend upon a port where the trade was almost stagnant. He thought £14,000 was a very large sum to spend upon a new building, for he understood that there was not a new site to be bought; the money was for the building only, to be erected on the old site. He agreed that our Consuls should be properly housed, but when the Government were trying to economise money in so many directions he thought £14,000 for this purpose was a very large and excessive amount. He also desired to call attention to a sum of £5,400 for reconstructing the Chancery in Paris. He hoped the exterior would not be interfered with. It was hardly necessary to spend £5,400 on reconstructing the interior.

*MR. REES said he had always understood that the Consulate at Port Said was combined not as regards the office, but as regards the occupant, for many years with the agency of the P. and O. Company. He did not understand the necessity for a new building although he did not agree with the contention of the hon. Member opposite that a Consulate was no longer required at Port Said. It would be required and very much required as long as the Suez Canal was in use, and we were the owners of India, and the carriers of the world.

SIR F. BANBURY said the right hon. Gentleman had not answered his question as to why it was necessary to erect a new Consulate at Port Said. Had there been any increase of business there which made that step necessary? The only reason which had been given was that the old building was a bad one. He was glad that on this point they had the hon. Member for Montgomeryshire on their side. He understood that there was no question of acquiring land, and all the right hon. Gentleman stated was that the old buildings were going to be improved. The right hon. Gentleman in his reply was very amusing and said he would get for him the schedule of wages and have it translated into the English currency. That was not what he wanted at all. His point was that they were able to build more cheaply at Port Said than in this country because wages were lower, and he thought £10,000 was a very large sum to spend upon a house in Port Said. The right hon. Gentleman had given him no answer whatever to that question. He wanted to know whether it was not a fact that they could build more cheaply there, and whether it was not true that £10,000 spent upon a house at Port Said was probably equal to £15,000 spent in this country for the same purpose. If he was right in that contention he wanted to know why in that part of the world it was necessary to spend such a large sum. If he did not get a satisfactory answer to those points he should certainly divide the House.

MR. T. L. CORBETT moved to reduce the Vote by £200. Those hon. Members who cared so much about economy in these matters felt compelled, after the very unsatisfactory answers they had received to the points they had raised, to divide the Committee upon this Motion. The hon. Baronet the Member for the City of London had appealed to him as one who had known Port Said for more years, perhaps, than almost any other Member of the House, to express his opinion on this point, and he could only say that he thought the expenditure of £14,000 on a Consulate there, without one word of explanation, was almost as remarkable as the expenditure of £10,000 upon a Consulate at Mukden, which had been voted without one word of protest from hon. Members below the gangway, and those representing the Labour Party.

Motion made, and Question put, "That a sum, not exceeding £52,200, be granted for the said Service."—(*Mr. T. L. Corbett.*)

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 33; Noes, 190. (Division List No. 68.)

AYES.

Acland-Hood, Rt Hn.Sir Alex.F
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Balcarres, Lord
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Barrie, H. T. (Londonderry,N.)
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Coates, E. Feetham(Lewisham)
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Du Cros, Arthur Philip
Fell, Arthur
Forster, Henry William
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Gretton, John
Guinness, Walter Edward
Hamilton, Marquess of
MacCaw, William J. MacGeagh
M'Arthur, Charles
Moore, Wiliam
Pease,Herbert Pike(Darlington
Randles, Sir John Scurrah
Rawlinson,John Frederick Peel
Remnant, James Farquharson
Renton, Major Leslie
Salter, Arthur Clavell
Smith, Abel H. (Hertford,East)
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Thomson,W.Mitchell- (Lanark)
Valentia, Viscount
Younger, George

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir Frederick Banbury and Mr. Ashley.

NOES.

Agnew, George William
Allen, A. Acland(Christchurch)
Allen, Charles P. (Stroud)
Balfour, Robert (Lanark)
Baring, Godfrey (Isle of Wight)
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Barnes, G. N.
Barry, Redmond J.(Tyrone,N.)
Beale, W. P.
Beauchamp, E.
Bell, Richard
Benn,W.(T'w'r Hamlets,S.Geo.
Bowerman, C. W.
Brigg, John
Bright, J. A.
Brodie, H. C.
Bryce, J. Annan
Burke, E. Haviland-
Buxton, Rt.Hn.Sydney Charles
Byles, William Pollard
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Causton,Rt.Hn.Richard Knight
Cawley, Sir Frederick
Cherry, Rt. Hon. R. R.
Clough, William
Collins,Sir Wm.J.(S.Pancras,W
Compton-Rickett, Sir J.
Cooper, G. J.
Corbett,C H(Sussex,E.Grinst'd
Cotton, Sir H. J. S.
Crean, Eugene
Crooks, William
Crosfield, A. H.
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, Ellis William (Eifion)
Davies, Timothy (Fulham)
Davies, W. Howell (Bristol, S.)
Delany, William
Duckworth, James
Duffy, William J.
Duncan, C. (Barrow-in-Furness
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)
Dunne,Major E.Martin(Walsall
Erskine, David C.
Essex, R. W.
Esslemont, George Birnie
Everett, R. Lacey
Fiennes, Hon. Eustace
Fuller, John Michael F.
Gibb, James (Harrow)
Gill, A. H.
Gladstone,Rt.Hn.Herbert John
Glen-Coats, Sir T. (Renfrew,W.
Glover, Thomas
Gooch, George Peabody (Bath)
Grant, Corrie
Gurdon, Rt Hn.Sir W.Brampton
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Lewis
Hardy, George A. (Suffolk)
Harmsworth, Cecil B. (Worc'r)
Harvey, A. G. C. (Rochdale)
Harvey,W.E.(Derbyshire,N.E.
Haworth, Arthur A.
Hazel, Dr. A. E.
Hazleton, Richard
Healy, Timothy Michael
Helme, Norval Watson
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Henry, Charles S.
Higham, John Sharp
Hobart, Sir Robert
Hope,W.Bateman(Somerset,N.
Horniman, Emslie John
Howard, Hon. Geoffrey
Hudson, Walter
Hyde, Clarendon
Illingworth, Percy H.
Jowett, F. W.
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kelley, George D.
Kennedy, Vincent Paul
Kilbride, Denis
King, Alfred John (Knutsford)
Laidlaw, Robert
Lamont, Norman
Lardner,James Carrige Rushe
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Lehmann, R. C.
Lever, A. Levy(Essex,Harwich
Levy, Sir Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, Rt. Hon. David
Lough, Thomas
Lupton, Arnold
Macdonald, J. R.(Leicester)
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah(Down, S.)
MacVeigh, Charles(Donegal,E.)
M'Callum, John M.
M'Crae, George

M'Laren, H. D. (Stafford, W.)
M'Micking, Major G.
Mallet, Charles E.
Marks,G.Croydon(Launceston)
Marnham, F. J.
Massie, J.
Meehan,FrancisE.(Leitrim,N.)
Micklem, Nathaniel
Middlebrook, William
Montagu, E. S.
Mooney, J. J.
Morrell, Philip
Morton, Alpheus Cleophas
Muldoon, John
Myer, Horatio
Nicholson,Charles N.(Doncast'r
Norman, Sir Henry
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nugent, Sir Walter Richard
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Doherty, Philip
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Kelly, James(Roscommon,N
O'Malley, William
Parker, James (Halifax)
Partington, Oswald
Pearce, Robert (Staffs, Leek)
Pollard, Dr.
Price, C.E. (Edinb'gh, Central)
Priestley, Arthur (Grantham)
Priestley,W.E.B. (Bradford,E.)
Radford, G. H.
Raphael, Herbert H.
Rea, Walter Russell (Scarboro'
Reddy, M.
Rees, J. D.
Richards, Thomas(W.Monm'th
Richards,T.F.(Wolverh'mpt'n
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roberts, G. H. (Norwich)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robson, Sir William Snowdon
Roche, John (Galway, East)
Rowlands, J.
Runciman, Walter
Russell, T. W.
Samuel,Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Scott,A.H.(Ashton under Lyne
Seaverns, J. H.
Seddon, J.
Seely, Colonel
Shackleton, David James
Shaw,Rt. Hon.T. (Hawick B.)
Simon, John Allsebrook
Snowden, P.
Stanger, H. Y.
Stanley, Albert (Staffs, N. W.)
Stanley, Hn. A.Lyulph(Chesh.)
Stewart-Smith, D. (Kendal)
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Summerbell, T.
Taylor, John W. (Durham)
Tennant,SirEdward(Salisbury
Thomas,DavidAlfred(Merthyr
Thompson,J.W.H.(Somerset,E
Tomkinson, James
Verney, F. W.
Wadsworth, J.
Walters, John Tudor
Ward,W. Dudley(Southampt'n
Waring, Walter
Wason, Hon. E. (Clackmanan)
Waterlow, D. S.
White, Sir George (Norfolk)
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whitley, John Henry (Halifax)
Wiles, Thomas
Wills, Arthur Walters
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid)
Wilson, J. H. (Middlesbrough)
Wilson, P. W. (St. Pancras, S.)
Wilson, W. T. (Westhoughton)
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Whiteley and Mr. J. A. Pease.

Original Question again proposed.

MR. FELL called attention to an item of £815 for new boundary walls for the Consulate Gaol at Shanghai, and asked for an explanation. It was a singular thing that where the Chinese were concerned the House could not get away from walls and gaols and compounds. It puzzled him to understand why we should have a gaol of our own at Shanghai so extensive as to require a boundary wall which was to cost £815.

MR. GRETTON (Rutland) asked for information in regard to a sum proposed to be taken for the Embassy buildings at Madrid.

THE DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: It is not in order now to discuss capital outlay. The item in the Vote is for maintenance and repairs.

MR. GRETTON said he wished to get information on that subject. A sum of money was put down last year and the work was not gone on with. He thought he would be in order in asking why, for the time being, the proposal for renewing the buildings was not gone on with.

THE DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member must see that maintenance has nothing to do with anything that has not been gone on with.

MR. GRETTON said they were now asked to vote money for buildings which were not satisfactory, and which ought to be renewed. He thought he would be in order in questioning the expenditure of money on such buildings.

THE DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: There is no charge for new buildings, and, therefore, there can be no discussion on that subject. You cannot discuss capital outlay on the question of maintenance.

MR. GRETTON said he bowed to the Chairman's ruling. He would put the matter on a narrower basis and ask whether the sum of money to be voted for the maintenance of Embassies was adequate for the maintenance at Madrid of the dignity of the representative of this country. The proper maintenance of the Embassy at Madrid was a matter of great interest to this country, and he desired to know whether it was proposed to expend any larger sum in any future year.

THE DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: The question whether there will be expenditure of a larger sum in any future year has nothing to do with this Vote.

MR. GRETTON asked whether he might point out that the sum taken this year was not sufficient. The sum which had been taken was not sufficient to maintain the Embassy in a condition worthy of the dignity of this country. There was some difficulty in obtaining any information that evening in regard to some of these smaller items. He thought it was absurd that the First Commissioner of Works should be responsible for this Vote, but he was sure the right hon. Gentleman would give all information in his power to the Committee.

*MR. HARCOURT said he was always glad to afford to hon. Members opposite any information in his possession. The hon. Member for Great Yarmouth had asked a question as to the gaol at Shanghai. There had been a gaol at Shanghai for some time, as perhaps the hon. Member knew, but unfortunately it had been for many years surrounded by a wooden fence only. The Consul now thought it necessary to have a wall—a common thing in the case of a gaol—and he had given way to his representations. The hon. Member for Rutland seemed to take a great interest in the Embassy at Madrid, and to have been struck by its insufficiency. It was quite right that there should be appropriate accommodation for the representatives of His Majesty and this country at Madrid, but the hon. Member might not be aware that last year they had completed the whole of the Embassy at Madrid; it was in the finest quarter in the town, and was now absolutely finished and decorated. As a matter of fact he was attacked last year for the amount spent upon it. It was the absolute completion of the building that had kept it out of the Estimates this year, and the information of the hon. Gentleman must be somewhat out of date.

MR. GRETTON said he had not the honour of being present in the House last year, and therefore could not share in the explanation which the right hon. Gentleman had made on the last occasion. He saw that the Vote last year was only for £500. In connection with this subject might he ask what was the total amount expended on the Embassy?

MR. GOULDING (Worcester) thought that the information given about the new boundary wall for the Consulate at Shanghai was eminently unsatisfactory. Here was a sum of £800 spent in one year for a wooden paling. It was impossible to suppose otherwise than that that wooden paling had been grossly neglected, or else this hideous expenditure would not have been required. They had a Government in power uncommonly fond of cheeseparing of the most contemptible character, except with reference to certain jobs going on in Ireland. If a new paling was required, why not buy wood for it at home and send it out to Shanghai, thus giving employment to British workmen? Why should they erect a big, clumsy wall which would give employment to Chinese instead of supplying from this country an unclimbable fence which would give the greatest satisfaction? He presumed it was a Consular Gaol, and that Englishmen were not confined there. They knew that Chinamen were not very active in their movements; they had the misfortune to have a pigtail which had been of advantage to the Party opposite, and that pigtail often got in their way. They would be unable to get over an unclimbable fence; and if an order was given in this country for an unclimbable fence they would have the satisfaction of knowing that they had given English work to the English unemployed. He begged to move that the Vote be reduced by £350.

Motion made, and Question put, "That a sum, not exceeding £52,050, be granted for the said Service."—(*Mr. Goulding.*)

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 32; Noes, 188. (Division List No. 69.)

AYES.

Acland-Hood, Rt Hn. Sir Alex. F
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Ashley, W. W.
Balcarres, Lord
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Barrie, H. T. (Londonderry, N
Beach, Hn. Michael Hugh Hicks
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Coates, E. Feetham (Lewisham
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Courthope, G. Loyd
Du Cros, Arthur Philip
Fell, Arthur
Forster, Henry William
Gretton, John
Guinness, Walter Edward
Hamilton, Marquess of
MacCaw, William J. MacGeagh
M'Arthur, Charles
Moore, William
Pease, Herbert Pike (Darlington
Rawlinson, John Frederick Peel
Remnant, James Farquharson
Renton, Major Leslie
Salter, Arthur Clavell
Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, East)
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Thomson, W. Mitchell- (Lanark)
Valentia, Viscount
Younger, George

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Goulding and Sir Frederick Banbury.

NOES.

Agnew, George William
Allen, A. Acland (Christchurch)
Allen, Charles P. (Stroud)
Balfour, Robert (Lanark)
Baring, Godfrey (Isle of Wight)
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Barnes, G. N.
Barry, Redmond J. (Tyrone, N.)
Beale, W. P.
Bell, Richard
Benn, W. (T'w'r Hamlets, S. Geo.
Bowerman, C. W.
Brigg, John
Bright, J. A.
Brodie, H. C.
Bryce, J. Annan
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burke, E. Haviland-
Byles, William Pollard
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Causton, Rt Hn. Richard Knight
Cawley, Sir Frederick
Cherry, Rt. Hon. R. R.
Clough, William
Collins, Stephen (Lambeth)
Collins, Sir Wm. J. (S. Pancras, W
Compton-Rickett, Sir J.
Cooper, G. J.
Corbett, C H (Sussex, E. Grinst'd
Cotton, Sir H. J. S.
Craig, Herbert J. (Tynemouth)
Crean, Eugene
Crooks, William
Crosfield, A. H.
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, Ellis William (Eifion)
Davies, Timothy (Fulham)
Davies, W. Howell (Bristol, S.)
Delany, William
Dickinson, W. H. (St. Pancras, N
Duckworth, James
Duncan, C. (Barrow-in-Furness
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)
Dunne, Major E. Martin (Walsall
Erskine, David C.
Essex, R. W.
Everett, R. Lacey
Fiennes, Hon. Eustace
Foster, Rt. Hon. Sir Walter
Fuller, John Michael F.
Gibb, James (Harrow)
Gill, A. H.
Gladstone, Rt. Hn Herbert John
Glen-Coats, Sir T. (Renfrew, W.)
Glover, Thomas
Gooch, George Peabody (Bath)
Grant, Corrie
Griffith, Ellis J.
Gurdon, Rt Hn Sir W. Brampton
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Lewis
Hardy, George A. (Suffolk)
Harmsworth, Cecil B. (Worc'r)
Harvey, A. G. C. (Rochdale)
Harvey, W. E. (Derbyshire, N. E.
Haworth, Arthur A.
Hazel, Dr. A. E.
Hazleton, Richard
Healy, Timothy Michael
Helme, Norval Watson
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Henry, Charles S.
Higham, John Sharp
Hobart, Sir Robert
Hope, W. Bateman (Somerset, N
Horniman, Emslie John
Howard, Hon. Geoffrey
Hudson, Walter
Hyde, Clarendon
Illingworth, Percy H.
Jowett, F. W.
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kelley, George D.
Kennedy, Vincent Paul
Kilbride, Denis
Laidlaw, Robert
Lamont, Norman
Lardner, James Carrige Rushe
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Lehmann, R. C.
Lever, A. Levy (Essex, Harwich
Levy, Sir Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, Rt. Hon. David
Lough, Thomas
Lupton, Arnold
Macdonald, J. R. (Leicester)
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah (Down, S.
McVeigh, Charles (Donegal, E.)
M'Crae, George
M'Laren, H. D. (Stafford, W.)
M'Micking, Major G.
Marks, G. Croydon (Launceston)
Marnham, F. J.
Massie, J.
Micklem, Nathaniel
Middlebrook, William
Mond, A.
Montagu, E. S.
Mooney, J. J.
Morrell, Philip
Morton, Alpheus Cleophas
Myer, Horatio
Nicholson, Charles N. (Doncast'r
Norman, Sir Henry
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nugent, Sir Walter Richard
Nussey, Thomas Willans

O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Doherty, Philip
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Kelly, James (Roscommon, N
Parker, James (Halifax)
Partington, Oswald
Pearce, Robert (Staffs, Leek)
Pollard, Dr.
Price, C. E. (Edinb'gh, Central)
Priestley, Arthur (Grantham)
Raphael, Herbert H.
Rea, Walter Russell (Scarboro'
Reddy, M.
Rees, J. D.
Richards, Thomas (W.Monm'th
Richards, T.F. (Wolverh'mpt'n
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roberts, Charles H. (Lincoln)
Roberts, G.H. (Norwich)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robson, Sir William Snowdon
Roe, Sir Thomas
Rowlands, J.
Runciman, Walter
Russell, T. W.
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland
Samuel, S.M. (Whitechapel)
Scott, A.H. (Ashton under Lyne
Seaverns, J. H.
Seddon, J.
Seely, Colonel
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Rt. Hon. T. (Hawick B.)
Snowden, P.
Stanger, H. Y.
Stanley, Albert (Staffs, N. W.)
Stanley, Hn. A. Lyulph (Chesh.)
Stewart-Smith, D. (Kendal)
Straus, B. S. (Mile End)
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Summerbell, T.
Taylor, John W. (Durham)
Tennant, Sir Edward (Salisbury)
Thomas, David Alfred (Merthyr
Thompson, J. W. H (Somerset, E.
Tomkinson, James
Verney, F. W.
Wadsworth, J.
Waldron, Laurence Ambrose
Walters, John Tudor
Ward, W. Dudley (Southampt'n
Waring, Walter
Wason, Rt. Hn. E (Clackmannan
Waterlow, D. S.
Whitbread, Howard
White, Sir George (Norfolk)
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whitehead, Rowland
Whitley, John Henry (Halifax)
Wiles, Thomas
Wills, Arthur Walters
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Wilson, J. H. (Middlesbrough)
Wilson, P. W. (St. Pancras, S.)
Wilson, W. T. (Westhoughton)

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Whiteley and Mr. J. A. Pease.

Original Question again proposed.

And, it being after Eleven of the Clock, and objection being taken to further Proceeding, the Chairman proceeded to interrupt the Business.

Whereupon Mr. HARCOURT rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

Question put, "That the Question be now put."

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 187; Noes, 32. (Division List No. 70.)

AYES.

Agnew, George William
Allen, A. Acland (Christchurch)
Allen, Charles P. (Stroud)
Balfour, Robert (Lanark)
Baring, Godfrey (Isle of Wight)
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Barnes, G. N.
Barry, Redmond J. (Tyrone, N.)
Beale, W. P.
Bell, Richard
Benn, W. (T'w'r Hamlets, S.Geo.
Bowerman, C. W.
Brigg, John
Bright, J. A.
Brodie, H. C.
Bryce, J. Annan
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burke, E. Haviland-
Byles, William Pollard
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Causton, Rt. Hn. Richard Knight
Cawley, Sir Frederick
Cherry, Rt. Hon. R. R.
Clough, William
Collins, Stephen (Lambeth)
Collins, Sir Wm. J. (S. Pancras, W
Compton-Rickett, Sir J.
Cooper, G. J.
Corbett, C.H. (Sussex, E. Grinst'd
Cotton, Sir H. J. S.
Craig, Herbert J. (Tynemouth)
Crean, Eugene
Crooks, William
Crosfield, A. H.
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, Ellis William (Eifion)
Davies, Timothy (Fulham)
Davies, W. Howell (Bristol, S.)
Delany, William
Dickinson, W.H. (St. Pancras, N.
Duckworth, James
Duncan, C. (Barrow-in-Furness
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)
Dunne, Major E. Martin (Walsall
Essex, R. W.
Everett, R. Lacey
Fiennes, Hon. Eustace
Foster, Rt. Hon. Sir Walter
Fuller, John Michael F.
Gibb, James (Harrow)
Gill, A. H.
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert John
Glen-Coats, Sir T. (Renfrew, W.
Glover, Thomas
Gooch, George Peabody (Bath)
Grant, Corrie
Griffith, Ellis J.
Gurdon, Rt Hn. Sir W. Brampton
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Lewis
Hardy, George A. (Suffolk)
Harmsworth, Cecil B. (Worc'r.
Harvey, A. G. C. (Rochdale)
Harvey, W. E. (Derbyshire. N. E)
Haworth, Arthur A.
Hayden, John Patrick
Hazel, Dr. A. E.
Hazleton, Richard
Healy, Timothy Michael
Helme, Norval Watson
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Henry, Charles S.
Higham, John Sharp
Hobart, Sir Robert
Hope, W. Bateman (Somerset, N
Horniman, Emslie John
Howard, Hon. Geoffrey
Hudson, Walter
Hyde, Clarendon
Illingworth, Percy H.
Jowett, F. W.
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kelley, George D.
Kennedy, Vincent Paul
Kilbride, Denis
Laidlaw, Robert
Lamont, Norman
Lardner, James Carrige Rushe
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Lehmann, R. C.

Lever, A. Levy(Essex,Harwich
Levy, Sir Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, Rt. Hon. David
Lough, Thomas
Lupton, Arnold
Macdonald, J. R. (Leicester)
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah (Down, S.
MacVeigh, Charles(Donegal,E.)
M'Crae, George
M'Laren, H. D. (Stafford, W.)
M'Micking, Major G.
Marks,G.Croydon (Launceston)
Marnham, F. J.
Massie, J.
Micklem, Nathaniel
Middlebrook, William
Mond, A.
Montagu, E. S.
Mooney, J. J.
Morrell, Philip
Morton, Alpheus Cleophas
Myer, Horatio
Nicholson,CharlesN.(Doncast'r
Norman, Sir Henry
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nugent, Sir Walter Richard
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Doherty, Philip
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Kelly, James(Roscommon,N
Parker, James (Halifax)
Partington, Oswald
Pearce, Robert (Staffs, Leek)
Pollard, Dr.
Price,C.E.(Edinb'gh,Central)
Priestley, Arthur (Grantham)
Raphael, Herbert H.
Rea, Walter Russell (Scarboro'
Reddy, M.
Rees, J. D.
Richards, Thomas(W.Monm'th
Richards, T.F. (Wolverh'mpt'n
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roberts, Charles H. (Lincoln)
Roberts, G. H. (Norwich)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Roche, John (Galway, East)
Roe, Sir Thomas
Rowlands, J.
Runciman, Walter
Russell, T. W.
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Scott,A.H.(Ashton under Lyne
Seaverns, J. H.
Seddon, J.
Seely, Colonel
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Rt. Hon. T. (Hawick B.)
Simon, John Allsebrook
Snowden, P.
Stanger, H. Y.
Stanley, Albert (Staffs, N. W.)
Stanley, Hn. A.Lyulph(Chesh.)
Stewart-Smith, D. (Kendal)
Straus, B. S. (Mile End)
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Summerbell, T.
Taylor, John W. (Durham)
Tennant,SirEdward (Salisbury
Thomas,DavidAlfred(Merthyr
Thompson,J.W.H. (Somerset,E
Tomkinson, James
Verney, F. W.
Wadsworth, J.
Waldron, Laurence Ambrose
Walters, John Tudor
Ward,W. Dudley(Southampt'n
Waring, Walter
Wason,Rt.Hn.E (Clackmannan
Waterlow, D. S.
Whitbread, Howard
White, Sir George (Norfolk)
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whitehead, Rowland
Whitley, John Henry (Halifax)
Wiles, Thomas
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid)
Wilson, J. H. (Middlesbrough)
Wilson, P. W. (St. Pancras, S.)
Wilson, W. T. (Westhoughton)

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Whiteley and Mr. J. A. Pease.

NOES.

Acland-Hood,Rt Hn.Sir Alex.F
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Ashley, W. W.
Balcarres, Lord
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Barrie, H. T. (Londonderry,N.)
Beach,Hn.Michael Hugh Hicks
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord R. (Marylebone, E.)
Coates, E. Feetham(Lewisham)
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Du Cros, Arthur Philip
Fell, Arthur
Forster, Henry William
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Gretton, John
Guinness, Walter Edward
Hamilton, Marquess of
MacCaw, William J. MacGeagh
M'Arthur, Charles
Moore, William
Pease,Herbert Pike(Darlington
Rawlinson,JohnFrederickPeel
Remnant, James Farquharson
Renton, Major Leslie
Smith, Abel H. (Hertford,East)
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Thomson,W.Mitchell-(Lanark)
Valentia, Viscount
Younger, George

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Courthope and Mr. T. L. Corbett.

Original Question put accordingly, and agreed to.

Resolutions to be reported upon Monday next; Committee to sit again upon Monday next.

LOTTERIES AND ADVERTISEMENTS.

Ordered, That so much of the Lords Message as relates to the place and time of meeting of the Joint Committee on Lotteries and Advertisements be now considered.

Lords Message considered.

Ordered, That the Committee of this House do meet the Lords Committee as proposed by their Lordships.—(*Mr. Whiteley.*)

Message to the Lords to acquaint them therewith.

Adjourned at twenty-one minutes after Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Friday, 3rd April, 1908.

The House met at Twelve noon of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Hull and Barnsley Railway Bill.—Read a third time, and passed.

Great Eastern Railway (General Powers) Bill.—As amended, considered; to be read a third time.

PETITIONS.

CHILDREN BILL.

Petition from Edinburgh, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

COAL MINES (EIGHT HOURS) (No. 2) BILL.

Petition from London, against; to lie upon the Table.

COAL MINES (EIGHT HOURS) (No. 2) BILL.

Petitions in favour; from Ayr; and Dalmellington; to lie upon the Table.

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL.

Petitions in favour; from Kingston; Sevenoaks; Wear Valley; Winchester (five); and Wood Green; to lie upon the Table.

HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES BILL.

Petition from Falkirk, against; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSED PREMISES (EXCLUSION OF CHILDREN).

Petition from Blandford, for legislation; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSING BILL.

Petitions against; from Barmboro'; Blackburn; Blackpool (four); Bolton on Dearne; Bradford; Chipping Wycombe; Conisborough (three); Desborough, Dorchester; Fairford; Fulham; Goldthorpe; Harlington; High Wycombe; Kennington; Leeds; Littlemore (two); Nailsworth; Sheffield (eight); Stokenchurch; Swindon; Tetsworth; Thurncoe (two); Wath on Dearne (three); and Wheatley; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSING BILL.

Petitions for alteration; from Allerton; Bradford (six); Rochdale; and Wibsey; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSING BILL.

Petitions in favour: From Aberdeen (two); Attleborough; Aysgarth (two); Barnsley; Bath; Batley (five); Benwell; Blackheath; Bradford (two); Brandon Colliery; Brymbo; Byker; Codnor; Coleham; Cowes; Crosshills; Deer; Denholme; Egerton (three); Fenton; Fraserburgh; Glasgow; Guisbrough; Hackney; Halifax; Hempnall; Hoolgerrig; Herne Hill; Hopewell; Horwich; Kelvedon; Kilsyth; Kingston; Lancaster (two); Leeds; Liskeard; Lymington; Macclesfield; Middleton; Newport; Newton Heath; Ovington; Pendleton; Penwith; Port Isaac; Prestwich; Ramsgate; Raydaleside; Ripponden; Rugby; Sandown; Sevenoaks; Smithy Bridge; Southsea; Stakeford; Stockport (three); Streatham; Sudbury; Truro; Turriff; Ventnor; Watergrove; Wear Valley; Wensleydale; West Auckland; West Norwood; Winchester (five); Wood Green; Worsley; Worthing; and, Yardley; to lie upon the Table.

LIQUOR TRAFFIC (LOCAL OPTION) (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petitions in favour: From Deer; Falkirk; Glasgow (two); and, Saltcoats; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY BILL.

Petitions in favour: From Bilston; Coseley; Erith; Pontypool; and, South Nutfield (two); to lie upon the Table.

WOMEN'S ENFRANCHISEMENT BILL.

Petitions in favour: From Edinburgh; and, Wolverhampton; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

Copy presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Report, Annual Series, No. 3968 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Post Office Surveyors' Districts.

MR. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he will state the numbers of surveyors' districts in Ireland and in England, respectively; and whether, with regard to applications for head postmasterships or other superior appointments, one application is allowed to be forwarded from each surveyor's district in England, if one or more than one candidate applies in each of such districts, whereas one application only is allowed to be forwarded from the whole of Ireland even when there are several applicants in each surveyor's district in Ireland.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) The number of surveyors' districts in Ireland is three and the number in England is eleven. All applications for head postmasterships and other superior appointments, whether from candidates in Ireland or England, are forwarded to head quarters and considered there. Naturally, however, much weight is attached to the opinion of the Secretary at Dublin as to which of these candidates is the best.

Imperial Grant for Upkeep of Highways.

MR. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in view of the fact that damage is done by traction engines and heavy locomotives to roads which have to be kept in constant repair by the local authorities, he will consider the advisability of recommending the imposition of a tax upon such conveyances and thereby relieve the ratepayers from the burden now imposed on them.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) Any question as to the imposition of a tax should be addressed to my right hon. friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Argentine and Natal—Supposed Preferential Tariff.

SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): To ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he can give the House any information as to recent negotiations between the Government of Natal and that of the Argentine Republic, in which Natal is stated to have offered preferential terms to Argentina in wheat and meat.

(*Answered by Mr. Churchill.*) No information has been received in the Colonial Office on the subject.

The Tug "Rover's" Engines.

MR. HOLT (Northumberland, Hexham): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty what are the number and diameter of the cylinders and length of stroke of the engines of the tug "Rover."

(*Answered by Mr. Edmund Robertson.*) The tug "Rover" will have—Two high-pressure cylinders, 14½ inches diameter; two intermediate-pressure cylinders, 23¼ inches diameter; two low-pressure cylinders, 37¾ inches diameter; length of stroke, 2 feet 9 inches.

Unappointed Learners in Belfast Post Office.

MR. SLOAN: To ask the Postmaster-General how many learners with two years service and upwards are still unappointed in the Belfast post office, and whether the officers recently appointed have received notification.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) The appointment to the establishment of each of the learners at Belfast with as much as two years service is already being proceeded with. These officers will be notified of their appointment in due course.

Irvine Post Office.

MR. YOUNGER (Ayr Burghs): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he has yet come to a decision with regard to a new post office at Irvine.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) This matter is still under consideration.

Sentence on Mrs. E. Pelosi.

MR. REMNANT (Finsbury, Holborn): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if his attention has been called to the case of Mrs. Elizabeth Pelosi, of 17, Baker's Row, Holborn, who was sentenced on 14th March by Mr. Mead at Marlborough Street Police Court to a month's imprisonment, and recommended by him for deportation, for playing an organ in the streets accompanied by her child of two years old, which, according to the magistrate, seemed to have been well treated; and whether, seeing it was her first offence and that she has several children depending on her, he will cancel the remainder of the sentence.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) I have gone very carefully into all the circumstances of this case, but, as I informed the hon. Member in a letter of yesterday's date, I have not seen my way to recommending His Majesty to remit any portion of the sentence passed by the magistrate. It is to be observed that the conviction was not as stated in the Question, but for the offence of causing a child to be in the streets for the purpose of inducing the giving of alms. I have, however, felt justified in deciding not to make the expulsion order which was recommended in addition to the sentence, and to allow the woman to remain in this country.

Small Holdings.

MR. D. A. THOMAS (Merthyr Tydvil): To ask the President of the Local Government Board, in view of the fact that the intention of the Small Holdings Act of last Session was that interest on the purchase money and a yearly sum as a sinking fund sufficient to recoup the whole cost of the land should be included in the rent charged by the county council to the small-holder, without the latter acquiring any interest in the fee simple of the property, if it would be competent for the county council to exclude such charges and defray them itself, if it so desires, without its members becoming liable to be surcharged by the auditor.

(*Answered by Mr. John Burns.*) It will rest with the auditor to determine in the first instance what course he will take if a case of the kind referred to comes before him. Any action taken by him in the matter would be subject to appeal to the Local Government Board. Of course I cannot say beforehand what the decision of the Board upon any such an appeal would be, but in dealing with it they would take into consideration all the circumstances of the case.

Largy National School—Publican as Master.

MR. FETHERSTONHAUGH (Fermanagh, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if the Commissioners of National Education in Ireland have had it brought to their attention that Largy school, county Antrim, near Portglenone, is situate within a few yards of a public-house, and that the name of the schoolmaster and the licensed proprietor of the public-house are the same; is the schoolmaster the licensed person; and, if not, where does the nominally licensed person reside, and is the public-house in fact managed by the schoolmaster or members of his household; and is the management of a public-house by any schoolmaster, or any of his household, in close proximity to the school, permitted by the Board.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The Commissioners of National Education inform me that under their rules teachers are strictly forbidden to keep public-houses or to live therein, and the Commissioners do not recognise as a teacher the husband or wife of the owner or occupier of a public-house. The Commissioners have no information as to the alleged breach of the rule by a teacher at Largy national school, but will make inquiries on the subject.

Kenmare Fair Rent Applications.

MR. BOLAND (Kerry, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state the number of applications to fix fair rents received by the Irish Land Commission for the two years ended 30th June, 1907, from tenants in the Kenmare rural district; how many of these applications have been heard by the Sub-Land Commission; the date of the last sitting of the Sub-Land Commission in Kenmare; and, having regard to the number of applications remaining unheard on the 30th June, 1907, and the period that has elapsed since the last sitting at Kenmare, he can state the earliest date of the hearing of these applications by the Sub-Land Commission.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The number of applications to fix fair rents received by the Land Commission from the rural districts of Kenmare during the two years ending 30th June, 1907, was seventy-two.

Two Sub-Commission sittings were held at Kenmare in 1907. The latest sitting was held on 3rd October, 1907, at which all cases lodged prior to 1st April, 1907, were dealt with. Of the seventy-two cases referred to only thirteen remain unheard. A further sitting will be held at Kenmare at as early a date as possible, regard being had to the claims of other districts.

Repair to Boat-slip at Roads, Glen Cove.

MR. BOLAND: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the attention of the Congested Districts Board has been called to the present state of the boat-slip at Roads, County Kerry, and to the unfinished condition of the slip at Glen Boat Cove, whereby it is impossible for the fishermen to carry on the fishing industry; and whether steps will be taken to repair these slips at the earliest possible moment.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The Congested Districts Board propose to carry out certain works at Roads Slip, County Kerry, in the summer of the present year, but will have no funds available for work at Glen Boat Cove, or for any other project to which they are not yet already committed.

Purchase of the Estate of Mr. R. Keys, of Crolly.

MR. HUGH LAW (Donegal, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the trustees and tenants of the estate of the late Mr. Richard Keys, of Crolly, County Donegal, have mutually agreed as to the sale and purchase of the estate; whether the Congested Districts Board has intimated that it is unable to carry out the purchase for lack of funds; and whether, seeing that the rental amounts only to £44 per annun and the purchase price is consequently small, he will make such arrangements as will enable the Board to cause the purchase to be carried out forthwith.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) In April, 1906, the Congested Districts Board informed the owner's solicitors that they were willing to make an offer for the estate in question upon receiving the rental of the estate, but no reply was received. I am not aware of any agreement between the trustees and the tenants of the estate. The Board are not now in a position to reopen negotiations in the matter for reasons which I have already fully stated.

Aghatubrid Estate Dispute.

MR. BOLAND: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the solicitor of the Aghatubrid estate of the late Mr. J. W. Leahy has now replied to the letter of the Estates Commissioners; and whether, in view of the fact that processes have been issued against the tenants for arrears of rent which had been agreed to be wiped out by the late owner, and that the case is fixed for hearing at Killarney on 4th April, he will cause the hearing to be postponed in the event of the solicitor to the estate not having replied to the letter of the Estates Commissioners, seeing that the tenants have fulfilled their side of the agreement, and that the production of this letter is a material fact in the case.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The reply to the first part of the Question is in the negative. I have already intimated to the hon. Member that no proceedings for sale are pending between the present owner and the Estates Commissioners. The Commissioners, therefore, have no power, nor have the Government, to interfere in any legal proceedings which may be taken by the owner for the recovery of rent.

Cordite Destroyed.

MR. BELLAIRS (Lynn Regis): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether the whole of the Ordnance depots were under War Office control up to the 31st March, 1908; whether he can state what amount of cordite has been destroyed or got rid of up to that date at these depots since the 1st January, 1907; and what is the amount of cordite still remaining in which mercuric chloride has been found, or which is awaiting examination for the purpose of ascertaining if it contains mercuric chloride, or is in any way deteriorated.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) There are naval ordnance depots at certain places which are not under the control of the War Office. The amount of cordite destroyed cannot be stated without reference to the various stations. None has been destroyed because it contained mercuric chloride unless it was found by testing to have deteriorated. All cordite is periodically examined to see whether it has deteriorated, and the tests applied for this purpose determine the stability of the cordite, whether mercuric chloride is present or not. I have no materials available to enable me to state the actual quantities.

MR. BELLAIRS: To ask the Secretary of State for War whether hitherto it has been the invariable practice for cordite to be passed for both Army and Navy by inspectors under the War Office; whether any statement has been obtained from the companies which used mercuric chloride as to the dates at which the practice was commenced of adding this unlawful ingredient, and so masking the only test which was applied to the cordite; and whether he can, from this data, state approximately the total quantity of cordite containing mercuric chloride which was thus passed into the Army and Navy and to India, irrespective of what may have since been used at target practice.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane*). The reply to the first part of the Question is in the affirmative. As regards the second part of the Question only the National Explosives Company have informed us as to the date when mercuric chloride was first used. As regards the last part of the Question, it is not possible to give any figures, but the whole of the stock of cordite in which mercuric chloride may be present will in the usual course be tested for stability.

Permanent Staff of Norfolk Garrison Artillery (Militia).

MR. FELL (Great Yarmouth): To ask the Secretary of State for War what will be the position of the present permanent staff non-commissioned officers of the Prince of Wales's Own Norfolk Royal Garrison Artillery (Militia) when the regiment becomes field artillery; and will they still continue on the staff.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) Any sergeants who formerly served in Royal Horse or Field Artillery will be available for posting to the permanent staff of the Reserve Field Artillery, or of the Territorial Horse and Field Artillery. If not so required they will be absorbed in the Royal Horse or Field Artillery. Those who formerly served only in the Royal Garrison Artillery, if not required for the permanent staff of the Territorial Artillery, will be absorbed in the Royal Garrison Artillery. Every consideration will be shown in dealing with the permanent staff, and preference as regards appointments on the staff of the Territorial Artillery will be given to any individuals whom it is impossible to employ with the Reserve Artillery.

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).

Sir WILLIAM BRAMPTON GURDON reported from the Committee of Selection; That they had discharged the following Member from Standing Committee B (in respect of the Children Bill): Sir Maurice Levy; and had appointed in substitution (in respect of the Children Bill) Mr. Wedgwood.

Report to lie upon the Table.

PORT OF LONDON BILL.

Ordered, That the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills do examine the Port of London Bill, with respect to compliance with the Standing Orders relative to Private Bills.—(*Mr. Lloyd-George.*)

POOR LAW (IRELAND) BILL.

Order for Second Reading read.

CAPTAIN CRAIG (Down, E.), in moving the Second Reading of the Poor Law (Ireland) Bill, asked the indulgence of the House while he tried to be as concise as he could in bringing forward this measure which dealt with a question of grave importance. Doubtless everyone would be aware that the question of Poor Law reform had agitated people's minds, not alone in Ireland, but throughout Great Britain for many years past, and there could be no question that the verdict of the country had been expressed at all events outside that House, to the effect that the present Poor Law system was bad in very many directions and needed vast reform. In many respects it was quite out of date, and it had proved to be unconsciously cruel in many of its administrative details. Very few of those who paid poor rates in this country were acquainted with the manner in which their money was spent. Very few of them had gone to the trouble of entering the workhouses in order to see for themselves the conditions under which the poor of the country lived in those institutions. He wished to cast no reflection whatever on the officers charged with the administration of the Poor Law throughout the country, for they were a capable and very intelligent body of men; what he was referring to was the system which had grown up in the last seventy years in Ireland, and the conditions under which the officers of the Poor Law had to carry out administrative details. In the Bill which he was bringing before the House they did not pretend to go into details; indeed, they could not formulate a scheme which would meet all objections; nor did they lay down any hard and fast rule, or sketch any scheme to which they asked the House to bind itself, by setting to it the seal of its approval. He made those remarks because what was to follow was merely an outline or an indication of a desire which some of them had for the reorganisation of the whole Poor Law system in Ireland, root and branch. The largeness of the subject precluded him, in the first instance, from dwelling upon its past history in order to set forth and describe the exact conditions under which the Poor Law was administered in Ireland in the present day. He would approach the subject not alone from the point of view of the present but of future generations, and also from the point of view of the appliances, improved scientific methods in all physical branches, from the point of view of the poor themselves, and of the capacity of the people of various localities to bear the rates which would be necessitated under the Bill. They hoped the rates would be no higher than hitherto, but they trusted that they would greatly increase the possibility of securing payment from those who were able to pay, while attaining a sufficient amount of work from all the able-bodied who found themselves in Poor Law institutions. He asked the House particularly to bear in mind that whilst charity must temper their consideration of any such measure as this, they must also bring to bear common sense and business prudence to guide their footsteps. The Bill referred entirely to Ireland; and it would be interesting to know that the first Poor Law Act for Ireland was passed on 31st July, 1838. That Act was the groundwork of all the Poor Law Acts under which they were living. The great famine in 1847 brought untold misery upon Ireland, and numerous alterations were made and extensions effected in the Poor Law in order to cope with that terrible time. About that period, or after the famine, boards of guardians were permitted to give outdoor relief, and he believed that, at present, the state of the law in regard to outdoor relief was exactly the same as when it was first introduced. A Royal Commission on this subject presented a Report to King William IV. in 1836, and he would ask the House, if they had not already done so, to consider what that Report said. Seventy years ago a Royal Commission inquired into the whole matter, and made recommendations which would astonish the House, for they afforded a very interesting lesson on this subject. That Commission recommended land drainage and reclamation on modern lines, the provision of labourers' cottages and allotments, the bringing of agricultural instruction to the doors of the peasant, the improvement of land tenure, the transfer of fiscal powers from grand juries to county boards, the employment of direct labour on roads by such county boards, the sending of vagrants to colonies to be employed or to penitentiaries in this country, the closing of public-houses on Sundays and the prevention of the sale of groceries and intoxicating drink in the same house for consumption on the premises. That Report, was, undoubtedly, far in advance of its time, but they could not but be struck by the fact that, by the flux of time, nearly all those recommendations had been carried out, some of them unwittingly, not by law, but simply by the good sense and feeling of the people. He quoted the Report because he wished to contrast it to a certain extent with the Viceregal Commission's Report, in 1906, which was the basis of the present Bill. Some hon. Members might be inclined to say that, taking the Report as a whole, it was Utopian; indeed, some hon. Members had already expressed that opinion. He could not conceive how any one, knowing that the recommendations of seventy years ago, which doubtless were considered Utopian in those days, had all come to be realised, could fail to give proper consideration to the recommendations of the Viceregal Commission—recommendations which might be considered Utopian, but which had the same chance of realisation as the recommendations made seventy years ago. The Report of the Viceregal Commission which showed that this was a matter of grave national importance for Ireland, had received widespread approval in Ireland, and the Royal Commission now sitting—he spoke subject to correction—on the question of Poor Law reform in the whole of the United Kingdom, had decided to adopt the Viceregal Commission's Report *in toto*, in regard to Ireland. In his opinion, it was most valuable to see that that Commission had put the seal of their approval to the Report of the Viceregal Commission, and decided to adopt it. It afforded conclusive evidence of what was necessary for the amelioration of the condition of the poorer classes so far as Poor Law reform in Ireland was concerned. He did not intend to go further into the past. If further evidence was necessary he would read to the House a few extracts from what the Commissioners said in their Report of 1906. They said—

> "We have inspected, as far as we are aware, all workhouses, county infirmaries, fever hospitals, and other hospitals in Ireland, maintained wholly or in part out of local rates. Moreover, for the purpose of reporting whether any further hospital accommodation for the sick poor is desirable, we visited and carefully inquired into the circumstances of those localities, including many islands off the sea coast, which are remote from any hospital. The number of witnesses examined by us was 743 and in nearly all cases our inspection of the various institutions concerned took place before we heard the views of witnesses. In this way we were better able to understand the suggestions made, and to discuss the various local proposals with the witnesses."

So that they had there, at all events, a most complete inquiry on the spot by Commissioners appointed by the Lord-Lieutenant. And the next short quotation was one which had guided them in framing this Bill. The Commissioners said—

> "It seemed to us that it would be our duty to ascertain how, if at all, a reduction could, without impairing efficiency, be made in the expenditure for the relief of the poor, and at the same time to show, if possible, how an improvement in the method or system of affording relief might be effected."

That was the kernel of the Bill—how an improvement in the method of affording relief might be effected, and how, if at all, reductions might be effected without impairing efficiency. He would explain to those who were not familiar with the intricate details of the subject, that in the poorhouses of Ireland, the inmates were gathered from all classes of the deserving and undeserving poor, and they were classified according to law in a manner which he would explain to the House. With few exceptions the way in which they were classified was as follows:—The sick, the aged and infirm, lunatics and all kinds of insane cases, sane epileptics, unmarried mothers, infants, children between infancy and fifteen years of age, casuals, or ins-and-outs, vagrants and tramps, and able-bodied paupers. They had to deal with 45,195 of all classes in 1905, and the point which he wished the House thoroughly to understand was that each of those classes which he had enumerated found a resting place in one or another of the workhouses in Ireland. The Commission reported—

> "We think that the present system of keeping so many different classes of persons in the same institution is one that ought not to be continued, and we received evidence throughout all Ireland strongly in favour of changing the system in this respect, provided that the rates would not be increased."

They had 159 union workhouses in Ireland, and under the county system there were thirty-four county infirmaries, and fourteen fever or infectious hospitals. A separate and very urgent question was dealt with by the Commission, namely, that of improvements in the treatment and isolation of patients suffering from pulmonary tuberculosis or consumption. Although they could not set up in the Bill a definite, clear, and cut-and-dried scheme which would meet that terrible disease in Ireland, still it had been one of their guiding principles in framing the measure that consumption, one of the greatest evils in Ireland, should be properly dealt with. In considering the lines which they should adopt, they thought it only right, and he hoped that the House would bear this in mind, to allow local energy and local ideas and the sympathetic feelings of the people to operate in their own particular way, and the Commissioners appointed under the Bill would guide their efforts in stamping out that disease in Ireland. They all knew the great effort that had been made to awaken the feeling of the people of Ireland to the proper treatment of the disease, and he believed one of the first effects of passing the Bill would be to strengthen the hands of those who had the idea constantly before them. He would pass from that clause to the question of children who were born in workhouses or who found their way into them in their early years. The Bill would in such cases as were considered desirable extend the power of boarding-out children. He had gone to the trouble of getting some information on the subject. The chief committee, had, of course, been the Viceregal Commission, and they, like anyone who had read the Report, must have been particularly struck by the statistics handed to them from Scotland. In 1903, and he believed there had been very little change in the figures since then, there were 7,110 children in receipt of relief in Scotland, of which number 6,195 or 87 per cent. were boarded-out, 1,800 with relations and 4,395 with strangers. The balance of 915, which was a very small percentage, were mainly in poorhouses, some sick and infirm, and others waiting to be boarded-out. The Commissioners had arrived at the view in favour of boarding-out children as far as possible before they saw the figures in Scotland, but they felt much strengthened in their opinion by what existed there. They also said that the system was similar in its plan of management to that adopted in Ireland by the Protestant Orphan Society, whose reports were most favourable as regards the condition of the children. They had there what he considered to be most valuable testimony from the Commission. They said that independently of any other inquiry, they went into the whole matter as regarded Ireland alone, and no sooner had they arrived at their conclusions on the matter than they were informed that Scotland had discovered after actual trial that the scheme worked admirably in every part of the country. That was testimony of the thoroughness and care with which the Report was prepared. Then he had obtained a few details from the City of Belfast with regard to the expense of keeping children in the workhouse, and he found that during the half-year ending 31st March, 1902, the number of children receiving indoor relief in that city was 3,860. It was practically the same in 1907. The education of those children showed a very considerable waste of money. The average attendance of children in Belfast workhouse for 1907 was 160. There were seven teachers, three male and four female, who received annual salaries amounting to £505. They received first-class rations, which amounted to about £40 a year, and their bonus brought it up to £93 11s. Thus the cost of educating 160 children was £878 11s., or roughly, £5 10s. per annum per child. If those children were boarded-out, there was no doubt that they could be educated at much less cost. By the boarding-out of children, they would remove them from the influence of hardened criminals in workhouses, and place them with chosen families, not necessarily the very best families in the district, but in families of such respectability, at all events, that by associating with the children of the family, they might grow up and become creditable citizens, whereas now in the workhouses they were shut out from a great deal of the human side of life, and went from bad to worse, and, being born and bred in the workhouse, were very apt to live the greater part of their life there and to die there. By being taken from the workhouse and placed in families where they could be properly looked after, and have some home life and associations, they were prevented from becoming criminals and probably being put on the rates for the whole of their natural lives. There was economy in the boarding-out principle outside the question of education altogether. Taking education alone they found that it saved a considerable amount of money to the rates. Provision was made in the Bill to safeguard the interests of any of the old loyal servants of the Poor Law in Ireland, because it was only fair that in any readjustment every care should be taken that an officer should not suffer in any way by losing his appointment or by being transferred from one part of the country to another, it being no fault whatever of the schoolmaster or mistress, or the workhouse master or any of the various staffs, that they had either changed their occupation or lost it altogether. The next point to which he wished to draw attention was the desirability, at all costs, of having labour homes established in Ireland, for the able-bodied who sought refuge in Poor Law institutions. The Commissioners recommended that four labour homes should be established for the whole of Ireland where these able-bodied men might be sent to contribute something towards the rates, and also to prevent such vagrants wandering through the country, finding it more pleasant to go into the workhouses and subsist on the rates than to work. An amount of work suited to their capacity, would be imposed upon them which would prevent them, at all events, seeking shelter there unless they were prepared to do a fair day's work. Of course, that would undoubtedly require a little alteration in the law. It was not as if one was advocating any harsh proceedings against innocent people, but those who habitually wandered from one union to another, and did no good to themselves and less to the community, should be placed in some such home as he had described. The details might be worked out later on. The scheme proposed in the Viceregal Commission provided that the sick should be provided for in county or district hospitals, that the aged and infirm should be placed and classified in most conveniently situated disused workhouses, that the insane of all kinds should be removed to the county or district asylum, that two or three disused workhouses might be set apart for insane epileptics, that mothers of illegitimate children should never be admitted or retained in any workhouse or institution where they would have freedom of ingress or egress, that all children should be boarded-out, that casuals and vagrants should be sent to labour houses, and that all other able-bodied should be put with the casuals and vagrants. So far as he could ascertain, the Report was unanimous with the exception of the hon. Member for Mid. Tyrone, and his exception was of a very trifling nature and he hoped could be met. Anyone would appreciate his difficulty, and great divergence of opinion would undoubtedly exist when any scheme was being framed as to the size of the area to be included under the scheme. He felt confident, however, that the hon. Gentleman assented to the whole of the Report, with the exception of what he had just stated, and they would do their utmost to meet him in that respect. The hon. Gentleman himself had said:—

> "Save upon this point and as regards the mode of admission to county district hospitals I am glad to say we find ourselves in harmony in our views upon all matters as set out in this Report."

He had done now with that part which dealt with the Commissioners' Report, and the Royal Commission which reported seventy years ago. Then he wished to point out how it was intended to bring all into the Bill, the suggestions in the Report which were not of a highly contentious nature. The basis of the Bill was the Educational Endowment (Ireland) Act, 1885, which settled the whole matter of educational endowments in Ireland, which was a wider and more vexed question. All parties agreed that something must be done to remedy the Poor Law, and he thought the best thing to do was to take as a model a Bill which had proved successful in a much more difficult case in former years. They felt compelled, while touching on all the vital points dealt with by the Viceregal Commission, to leave out the controversial question of the State Poor Law service, because that would arouse considerable feeling in individual localities where the ratepayers were anxious to have complete control of the local appointments. Although the Bill left out of consideration what steps might be taken to develop the natural resources of Ireland, it did not prevent their being dealt with later on. They decided to eliminate such matters, because they were desirous of appealing to the sympathies of the great Liberal Party to assist them in passing the Bill. This was not a party question, and he would be ready to hand the Bill over to any hon. Member if he thought the matter would be brought to a conclusion on the lines laid down by the Commission. The Bill was divided into four compartments. The first compartment contained the Interpretation Clause, Short Title, and the date of commencement of the Act, and the next compartment, Clauses 4, 5, and 6, dealt with the constitution of the Commission, their salaries, expenses, and powers. Clause 6, which was practically the whole Bill, showed that the Commissioners would have power to prepare draft schemes suggesting the area to be assigned to various institutions other than hospitals. Every safeguard they could think of had been put into the Bill, and it followed the idea of the Judicial Commissioners, and also gave power to consult every local authority in Ireland as to their desire to agree to a scheme which would enable many of those gathered in one workhouse to be distributed and classified in a number of other workhouses. Instead of having children, ne'er-do-wells, and decently respectable women who, by the hard circumstances of life had fallen upon the rates, the epileptics, the insane, all together in one institution, they would be placed in homes of their own under conditions which would suit the particular classes dealt with. In those homes they would receive as humane and as judicious treatment as was consistent with a proper regard for economy, and that would be a great triumph, if nothing else resulted from the measure. They wanted to sort out all classes and have the rogues and vagrants put into labour houses by themselves where they would not contaminate others. The young children were to be boarded-out. The Local Government Board was called in in every instance and full liberty was given to every association, local authority, and individual to appear before the Commissioners and make out their case, and they would be allowed to arrange schemes either for a county or a group of counties. Clause 7 provided that—

> "In framing schemes the Commissioners shall save or shall make full compensation for the interests of individuals holding any office, place, employment, pension, compensation allowance, or emolument, under or arising out of his or her employment by any local authority or governing body for the purposes of the Poor Law service at the date of the passing of this Act."

Clauses 10 to 23 dealt with procedure as to the manner in which power was to be held, and the only part he wished to call attention to was Clause 23, which was as follows—

> "On and after the passing of this Act it shall not be lawful for any board of guardians or other authority in Great Britain to remove into Ireland under the Acts relating to the relief of the poor, any person who shall have become chargeable to the rates after a residence in Great Britain of a period of six months continuously, and Section 1 and Subsection 1 of the Poor Removal Act, 1900, and Section 4 of the Poor Law (Scotland) Act, 1898, are hereby repealed."

There were other provisions which would appeal to those in Ireland who had to pay rates in an unfair way, and another clause provided for the termination of the Commission on 31st December, 1913. That would allow five clear years to elapse, after which the Commission would cease altogether, except in the instances mentioned. During that period it was hoped that the whole of Ireland would have fallen under schemes suitable to the various localities. Under the Educational Endowments Act there were two Judicial Commissioners who were Judges of the Supreme Court, but they felt it would be more convenient to make a departure from that, and provide that Recorders and County Court Judges in Ireland should be able to exercise the same powers. He was sure that there would be no objection whatever to the making of such a change. That was a matter which could be arranged in Committee. The financial clauses of the Bill would necessitate an urgent appeal to the Government, but he was perfectly convinced that the members of the Government were as fully alive to the importance of the question as he was. It was impossible at present to give any indication as to the cost of the scheme, but he believed it would in the end prove efficient and economical. There was an enormous waste of money and energy at present in connection with the Poor Law system, and though at the outset a sum of money would have to be advanced, he believed that in the long run the scheme would, from the economical point of view, satisfy every Member of the House. The Chief Secretary for Ireland had taken in the past considerable interest in this subject, and in Belfast last November, speaking on the Report of the Viceregal Commission, the right hon. Gentleman said—

> "I have in hand the Report of the Poor Law Reform Commission in Ireland. I wish everybody in this room would read that Report. It is better reading than all your newspapers; it is better reading than most of your novels; it is more moving than a thousand sermons. It goes right down deep into the very life of the people. It is concerned with matters that are going on at this moment, day by day and night by night. It describes the conditions of hundreds of thousands of poor people; it enters into the question how their *status* can be raised; it enters into the question how disease may be averted; it enters into the question how old age can be protected; it enters into the question how honest people can be saved from associating with the debased—all these questions it enters into and discusses. . . Here are only a few of its principal recommendations: '(1) The poverty of Ireland,' it says, 'cannot be adequately dealt with by any Poor Law relief such as that of 1838, but by the development of the country's resources, which is, therefore, most strongly urged. (2) The English and Scottish Removal Acts, so far as they relate to Ireland, should be repealed. (3) The present workhouse system should be abolished. (4) The various classes of inmates, except children, should be segregated into separate institutions. (5) The existing hospitals, whether Poor Law or county, should, except in a few cases, be retained in their present localities, but all should be placed under the management of county or district committees. Such hospitals should, as far as possible, be used only for the acute sick, and a sufficient number of consumptive sanatoria should be established. Additional cottage hospitals should be established at certain places in Ireland, and the system of home nursing for the poor extended.' I say the country is ripe—ripe and ready—for legislation upon those lines. When it is to obtain its opportunity I don't know; but all I can say is, If Irish people would only unite upon questions of this kind instead of disuniting upon other questions, progress could and would be made."

On Monday last, in the Home Rule debate, the Chief Secretary said in this House—

> "Ireland cannot afford to have her Poor Law reform delayed."

Members on the Unionist Benches cordially endorsed that remark, and when successful in the ballot they, after careful consideration, decided to introduce a Bill on the subject. As to the drafting of the Bill, everyone must have been struck with the care with which it had been prepared. Needless to say, he did not himself draft the Bill. Credit for that was due to the hon. and learned Member for North Armagh, who had taken infinite pains and trouble in putting their ideas into legal phraseology and presenting to the House a Bill which, whether passed this session or not, would, he was fully convinced, be for years to come the groundwork of the future Poor Law of Ireland. He begged to move.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Captain Craig.*)

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): I do not know whether the hon. Gentleman and his friends seriously expect or hope that this Bill can be treated as a practical legislative measure in this session of Parliament. I do not think myself that it is possible, and I think it will be found on examination of the Bill that the subject dealt with is of so vast a character that it will be practically impossible for it to be dealt with by a private Member's measure. But if the object of the hon. Gentleman and his friends is simply to raise a discussion upon this matter, I entirely sympathise with him. From my point of view it is another reproach to this Parliament that, although the Report of the Viceregal Commission was issued as far back as October, 1906, there has not been found time in Parliament to consider that Report or its recommendations. There is probably no grievance connected with Ireland of a more serious character than that dealt with by this Bill. For my part I have the utmost sympathy with those who desire to remove that grievance. The system of Poor Law in Ireland is extravagant and demoralising. The cost of the Poor Law is enormous. It costs about £1,250,000 a year, and the rate per head of the population is about 5s. 8d. So far as the demoralising character of the system is concerned it is enough, I think, to point out that there are congregated together in the same institutions, under the same roof, all sorts of classes of people who have met with reverses in the struggle for life. The sick are there, the aged and infirm, innocent children, helpless mothers of young children, the insane, tramps and casuals, and able-bodied paupers, all congregated together in the same institutions, and all subjected to the same workhouse stigma which, hateful as it is in this country no doubt, is, if possible, more hateful still to the feelings of the people of Ireland. The number of people so congregated in the Irish workhouses—taking the figure given in the Report—was 45,195, but I ask the House to note this significant fact, that out of that number only a little over 4,000 consisted of casuals, tramps, and able-bodied paupers who were there through destitution brought about by idleness or laziness and so forth. All the rest of the 45,195 inhabitants of these workhouses are people who are there from no fault of their own, who are simply the unfortunates in the struggle for life, and who ought to be dealt with in separate institutions, and not subjected to this horrible stigma of the workhouse system. I think there is no reform demanded in Ireland on which public opinion in that country is so unanimous as it is upon this. If I do not vote for the Bill of the hon. Members above the gangway—if they indeed think it wise, and no doubt they will consider the point, to push it to a division—it is simply because I am convinced, as I will show in a moment, that the machinery they provide for carrying out the reform is inadequate and unsuitable. It is not that I differ in the smallest degree from them in their view as to the necessity of a drastic dealing with the matter. I would like to call the attention of the House a little more precisely than the hon. Member has done to the history of this question. I suppose it will be said—I do not think it a matter for reproach—that I look at every Irish question from the point of view of Home Rule, and there is, in my opinion, no more dramatic and conclusive argument against the system of governing Ireland by this House since the Union than is to be found in the history of the Poor Law question. What occurred? In 1833 an Irish Royal Commission was appointed to consider the question whether or not it was desirable to extend the English Poor Law system to Ireland. That Commission was presided over by the Protestant Archbishop of Dublin, Dr. Whateley, the Catholic Archbishop was a member, and the whole body consisted of able and representative Irishmen. They sat for three years and investigated the whole question fully, and in the end they unanimously reported that the English Poor Law system was entirely unsuitable to Ireland. What did they say? The English Commission had been inquiring into the question of the Poor Law system for England, and the English Commission declared that the English problem required the provision of a system which would deal with ignorance, improvidence, vice, and refusal to work. The Irish Commission declared in their Report that that was not the problem to be dealt with in Ireland, and that, so far as Ireland was concerned—

> "The labouring classes there are very eager for work but no work could be got for them."

So that the two problems, English and Irish, were essentially different, and the Irish Poor Law Commission unanimously recommended that the problem in Ireland should be dealt with in the first instance by schemes for the development of the resources of Ireland, and in the second instance that the question of provision for the sick poor, aged and infirm, lunatics, tramps and casuals, and able-bodied paupers, should be dealt with by separate institutions. I would like to emphasise this a little more fully. In the Report of the recent Viceregal Commission the Chairman of the Commission says—

> "The Report of 1836, made just seventy years ago, must be read with great surprise when one carefully notes the recommendations made then, and at the same time observes how almost all the suggestions were, as time passed on, unconsciously acted upon. This shows how well and truly the Commissioners understood the requirements of the country. It would probably surprise most of those who study the condition of Ireland, and who have considered how to improve it, to find that a Commission that sat seventy years ago recommended land drainage and reclamation on modern lines, the provision of labourers' cottages and allotments, the bringing of agricultural instruction to the doors of the peasant, the improvement of the land tenure, the transfer of fiscal powers from Grand Juries to county boards, the employment of direct labour on roads by such county boards, the sending of vagrants to colonies to be employed or to penitentiaries in this country."

Those were actually the very objects of the Commission seventy years ago. What was the fate of the Report of that Irish Commission? Why, every one of its recommendations were over-ruled. Lord John Russell, who, I think, was the Home Secretary, when he read the Report, sent over to Ireland an English Poor Law official, called Nichols, to investigate the matter afresh, and after spending six weeks in Ireland—and the means of transit were not then as efficient as they are now, and he could not have moved much about in Ireland in the course of six weeks—this English official, who was never in the country before, came back to England and submitted a Report to Lord John Russell to the effect that the Irish Commission were entirely wrong, that they knew nothing about the subject, that they were entirely mistaken, and that the real thing Ireland wanted was an extension of the English system to that country. Lord John Russell threw the Report of the Irish Commission into the waste-paper basket, never referred to it again, and introduced a Bill into Parliament forcing the English system upon Ireland. That Bill was opposed vigorously in this House by the English representatives. It was opposed by O'Connell on the floor of Parliament and in Ireland. His opposition to the Bill was participated in by all the Irish Members of all parties in that day, the Lord Castlereagh of that day joined hands with O'Connell, and yet these omniscient governors of Ireland, who always know better what is good for Ireland than Ireland does herself, forced this Bill upon the country, and now, seventy years afterwards, a new Commission is appointed, and they unanimously report that the Commission of seventy years ago was right in every particular; that the system you forced upon Ireland seventy years ago was radically wrong and unsuitable for the country; that it has been a failure from that day to this, and they recommend its complete abolition. I do not want to turn this into a Home Rule debate, but it is fair, at any rate, that I should direct attention to the fact that there is no more dramatic, startling, and sensational proof of the incapacity of English statesmen to govern Ireland than is to be found in the history of this question. This is really an enormous question—a question which, in my opinion, it would be hopeless to deal with in a private Member's Bill. Let me just quote for the House shortly what the recommendations of the Commission would amount to. Like the Commission of 1833 they say that Irish poverty can only be removed by schemes for developing the industries of the country and giving employment. They recommend the total abolition of workhouses in Ireland, the segregation of the different classes of inmates into separate institutions, the deserving and decent sick folk to be put into workhouses and hospitals where there will be no taint of the workhouse upon them; the aged and the infirm to be put into other institutions; the insane to be put into asylums under the regular lunatic authorities; the vagrants — a small class, being 4,000 in all Ireland—the vagrants and the ne'er-do-wells who are destitute through indolence, vice, and the refusal to work to be put into separate institutions for themselves and not to be any way herded with the deserving poor. They recommend the repeal of the English and Scottish Removal Acts under which an Irish man or woman who spent a life of labour in England or Scotland, but who, at the end of their days become chargeable upon the rates, can be deported to Ireland, whereas Ireland has no such power to return English and Scottish paupers to their native places. These recommendations mean the total abolition of the system of Irish workhouses and the creating of new institutions for these separate classes. I do not think I agree with the view of the hon. Member who moved the Bill that this operation need not necessarily be an expensive one. I think the whole of this could be done, and whatever the initial cost might be it would, in the end, prove to be an economic transaction, but it is an enormous operation, and I fully realise that it could not be carried into effect by a private Member's Bill. Let me say what I conceive to be the duty of the Government. The Chief Secretary said the other day that there are enough great and vital problems affecting Ireland to occupy the whole of a session.

That is quite true, and this is one of those great vital problems. Even with your present system of Grand Committees the examination of a measure to deal with this reform would take a considerable time. These great problems are waiting for solution, and the Irish people are suffering all the time, and my view is that it is the duty of the Government to act promptly in this matter. The Chief Secretary promised in Belfast that this problem was engaging his attention. How long is it going to engage his attention? When is he going to get his opportunity of dealing with it? He may say that he cannot do it this session because of the University Bill. What about next session? Will he give a promise that he will introduce legislation on the subject next session and send his Bill to Grand Committee and see what can be done? So far as the present Bill is concerned, I welcome it, from the point of view of its affording us an opportunity of ventilating the matter. But as a piece of practical legislation, I cannot vote for the Bill if a division is taken. The machinery is entirely inadequate, and, indeed, is preposterous in its character. The Bill proposes to create a Commission consisting of two Judges. Then there are to be three lay assistant Commissioners to be associated with them, but they have no power at all. Their duties are to be assigned by the Judicial Commissioners, and apparently the intention is that they should hold inquiries, but all the judicial and administrative acts are to be performed by the two Judges, and their powers, therefore, would be enormous. They would have powers to abolish local bodies in Ireland, to amalgamate them, and to create new governing bodies—in fact, to interfere all over Ireland with the whole system of local government. If that is a right thing to do, surely the tribunal appointed to do it ought to be one in some sense representative of the Irish people. But to set up a tribunal consisting of two Judges without any representation of the regular public bodies elected by the people, is simply a preposterous proposal, and for my part, I could not dream of supporting it for one moment. I will not go into the other objections against the Bill; although they are many I am not anxious to pull the Bill to pieces. I welcome the opportunity of discussing this matter. I fully recognise the difficulty of private Members in drafting a Bill at all upon the subject, and I take up the position that while I cannot vote for this Bill because of this preposterous proposal which would throw the whole system into the melting pot, yet so deeply do I sympathise with the object the hon. Member has in view in trying to bring about this reform, that if he goes to a division I will not vote against him, though I cannot vote with him. We regard this matter as a most urgent grievance. In the main we agree with the recommendations of the Viceregal Commission. Some of them will no doubt lead to differences of opinion, such, for instance, as the recommendations as to the method in which the new medical service is to be created, and matters of that kind. These are matters about which there would be difference of opinion, and a good deal of discussion. But putting on one side four or five matters of that kind, in the main we on these benches approve of the recommendations of the Commission. We say that the present Poor Law system is a scandal and is injurious to Ireland, that it ought never to have been forced upon the country, and that it is a standing reproach to the Government. The Government ought to deal with the matter. We are in agreement upon the point that the grievance is an urgent one, and in the main we agree with the recommendations of the Commission. But if this Bill goes to a division it will be impossible for us to vote for it, and I for one, will walk out of the House.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. BIRRELL, Bristol, N.): I have listened with great interest to the exceedingly clear, sensible, and able speech made by the hon. Gentleman opposite, in moving the Second Reading of this Bill. I can assure him, for the present at least, I am at one with him in the object which he has at heart. We are all agreed about this subject. I will not follow the hon. and learned Gentleman who has just sat down in the very interesting remarks which he has made, but certainly nobody can make himself acquainted, as it has been my business to do, either with the past history of Poor Law administration in Ireland, or any such subject, without discovering that on such points agreement has usually existed among Irishmen, whatever may be the colour of their political opinions, and that in the early days they had their own plans and their own views of the soundest character and description, not only on the Poor Law question, but also for dealing with the vexed question of the land. Their views were disregarded and put on one side in obedience to the overwhelming opinion of England. That, certainly, is perfectly plain with regard to this Poor Law question and many others. The union of O'Connell and Castlereagh is to-day repeated, and we find hon. Gentlemen above and below the gangway united in urging that the Poor Law system as it now exists and has existed for so many years in obedience to English wishes and opinions, shall be set on one side. I scarcely need to say that I entirely concur with that view. I rejoice very much that this question should have been discussed to-day on the floor of the House. There are in Poor Law questions one or two things upon which both in England and Ireland there is an unusual agreement of opinion. One relates to classification of inmates of workhouses, another to the boarding-out of children. Any legislation that we have, either for England or for Ireland, dealing with Poor Law administration will, we know, proceed upon these two rational and humane principles. How they came to be overlooked for so long must be a matter of surprise, but then we all know with what little wisdom the world is governed. The necessity for the removal of children from workhouses to proper homes outside is one of the obvious things which must appeal to every really humane man. Nobody who has seen the different spirit and temper of poor children living in proper homes and moving backwards and forwards to schools where they meet the children of the neighbourhood—the different tone, temper, and spirit which enters into their lives, cannot but be overwhelmed with sorrow that the children of either England or Ireland have been submitted so long to a different state of things. Happily a child's lightness of heart prevails over almost everything, but the dullness, degradation, shame, and misery of workhouse life it is not strong enough to contend with. Therefore, on this point we are all entirely agreed. I do not want to say a word against the measure which has been introduced in so excellent a speech by the hon. and gallant Member, but I must point out—and I think the hon. Member will agree with me—that this Bill proposes to set up a different kind of Commission from that suggested in the Poor Law Commission's Report. It proposes to set up a Commission before the Bill has been passed which really enables the reforms to be carried out and before Parliament has laid down the lines upon which those reforms are to be carried out. I am sorry that that should be so. If this were a thing which could be done piecemeal and if a Bill could be passed which would in no way interfere with a subsequent larger measure, and only do a little bit of work, that would be an excellent thing; but the Commission it is proposed to set up will of necessity be a costly body. It will have all sorts of duties; it will in fact have the very duties which the Poor Law Commission suggested should be conveyed to a temporary Commission if a Bill were passed before that Bill has been passed and before anyone knows what shape or form the Bill will assume. The hon. and gallant Gentleman has referred to the very vexed question of the areas. That vexed question of the areas and rateable authority lies at the very root of the whole question, and until we determine what those areas are to be and upon whom the charges are to be made—whether they are to be the union or county areas—it is impossible to set loose a Commission travelling about the country to determine what institutions shall be set up when they will not know to whom they will be chargeable.

MR. MOORE (Armagh, N.): We can settle that by agreement.

MR. BIRRELL: I am afraid not. I quite agree that in this Poor Law matter there is no question outstanding, and, no controversy introducing the least bit of party spirit, but I know enough about the matter to know that there is a very considerable difference of opinion. It found expression in the Minority Report signed by the hon. Member, and there are many reasons *pro* and *con* to determine with regard to the question whether they shall have large or small areas. The Viceregal Commission suggested different areas in different cases, and proposed that the expenditure in regard to sick, aged, infirm, lunatics, and unmarried mothers shall be defrayed out of the county rate, but that the area of charge for children in industrial schools and other purposes shall be the electoral division, and until we have determined these things it will not, I think, help but rather hinder to set up a Commission.

MR. MOORE: Under the Bill nothing can be done unless all interests agree as to the area.

MR. BIRRELL: I am afraid in that case nothing will be done. I do not think it will be easy to ask me to go to the Treasury, and I do not want to do it unless I am asked, for the great expenditure necessary in setting up machinery of this sort, unless we can satisfy them that it is going to end in doing something, and not in doing nothing. The matter has to be faced and we have to determine the principles on which the country is to be marked out for rating responsibilities in respect of all these most important subjects. When that has been done, I do not doubt that it will be found necessary to appoint a Commission as suggested in the Poor Law Report in order to go over the country and arrange the admirable things set out in the clauses of the Bill. I am certain that at present no good result will follow from reading the Bill a second time. The hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Waterford has naturally asked me what I am going to do. I fully recognise the justice of that question. I am always sorry when I hear anyone say that he is going to read extracts from my speeches, but I am not in any way ashamed of the remarks I have made with regard to the Commission's Report, and which the hon. Member has quoted. It is only fair, however, to remember that one has to choose between subjects in the House. You cannot have a King's Speech in which there is nothing but Ireland from one end to the other, and as I cannot arrange that, I have to make choice between pressing subjects and I believe that the majority of those I have attempted to legislate upon—although one or two of the measures no doubt have given rise to angry feelings—will after discussion and full deliberation receive the general support of hon. Members from Ireland irrespective of Party. Controversial subjects have a knack of pushing themselves to the front; and having, in addition to such subjects as I have already attempted to legislate upon, the embroglio of the land question and the necessity of land reform staring me in the face, I cannot admit that I have been neglectful in my duty in getting time for Irish affairs. I am, however, prepared to say that I see no reason whatever why in the next session of Parliament a Bill proceeding upon the lines of the Bill just moved and carrying out the purport of the Royal Commission's Report should not be the first measure to receive the attention of Parliament and to be sent upstairs to a Committee after its Second Reading to be considered in all its details. All I can say in the absence of everybody from the Treasury Bench is that if hon. Gentlemen opposite, on both sides, continue to press these points upon me, as no doubt they will, I will do my very best so far as I am personally concerned to secure that a Bill, carrying out the reforms recommended in the Report of the Poor Law Commission and proceeding on the lines of the Bill discussed this afternoon and which has received general support on both sides of the House and from all parties in Ireland, shall be made a Government measure. Such a measure will, I conceive, be one of the first importance, and there is none next to the University Bill I introduced the other day with which I should better like to have my name however slightly connected and which will receive my more enthusiastic support.

MR. WALTER LONG (Dublin, S.) I confess that we must all feel a little disappointment that the Chief Secretary has not been able to make a reply of a somewhat more gratifying character than that to which we have listened. This is a subject on which I may claim to speak with some knowledge because I was for many years at the English Local Government Board where the same question incidentally arose, and I can go back to the earlier days when it was not only a question of the rearrangement of areas for Poor Law administration, but we had to deal with English counties which had detached portions of areas all over the county, which led to the utmost confusion in the incidence and collection of rates. The Chief Secretary admitted that the question of area was, if not the most important, probably the one which underlies the settlement of this whole question, and he said with great force — and I have myself used the same argument — that Parliament ought not to create a Commission and lay upon them a certain duty unless Parliament has first of all laid down the lines upon which that Commission is to proceed. Up to a certain point I entirely agree with the Chief Secretary, but he has not had what I have had, viz., practical experience in trying to deal with this question as a Minister in Parliament, and I do not believe that until you have set up this Commission you will make progress. It is probable that what is proposed by the Bill of my hon. and gallant friend, the Second Reading of which he moved in a speech which I was glad to hear the Chief Secretary speak of in such generous and well-deserved terms, as it seemed to me to be admirable, may be open to some of the criticisms passed upon it by the hon. and learned Member for Waterford. It may be thought that the Commission in its constitution would not meet with all the confidence it should meet with if it is to do good work in Ireland, but I am convinced that, if the Chief Secretary had seen his way to let the Bill be read a second time on the clear understanding that it went to a Select Committee and that the only object was to set up a Commission with certain powers, it is only by some method of that kind that you you can get this vexed question settled. I have read the interesting Report of the majority of the Commission, and also the minority Report of the hon. Member for Mid. Tyrone, and I may be pardoned for saying that I do not suggest anything improper when I say I am able to read between the lines of the Report. I know the sources from which many of the criticisms in that Report have come. They have come, not from the people who pay the rates and whose condition would be worsened, not from the people whose position would be improved if the areas were enlarged, but from those who are connected with the municipal bodies who are always able to advance arguments of a most potent character when any particular principles are involved. It is a class of vested interest which makes it almost impossible to proceed with reforms of this kind. What is the hope held out to us by the Chief Secretary? I accept it with the utmost gratification so far as it goes. It is that the Government hope to be able to deal with this question in a Government Bill next year. My hon. friends behind me who are interested in this Bill would be the first to admit that between the chances of this measure and those of a measure in the charge of the Government there is no comparison, and they have no doubt as to which they ought to accept. But by the admission of the Chief Secretary, and all those who have had to deal with this question, it is almost certain that unless some preliminary steps are taken by setting up a Commission, the Government will be unable next year to bring in a Bill of such a non-controversial nature that it would not raise a great discussion. The Chief Secretary said that the Commission recommended not one principle for the extension of the areas, but various principles adapted to different parts of the country. But in Paragraph 263 of the Report the whole centre of the difficulty is pointed out. It is pointed out that a rate of 1d. in the £ in a Poor Law union in Ireland only produces £45 11s. 10d. That is the crux of the question. But take the case of England where you have a union like the Toxteth Division of Liverpool and the old City of Liverpool Union. There you find that without any change in the law, the guardians have been able to carry out every one of the recommendations of this Report in regard to separating the classes, separate provision for labour homes, separate provisions in the workhouse for those who have come to a state of pauperism from no fault of their own, and others. Not only do they live in the building under different rules, but have different hours, and wear their own clothes. The children are not only boarded-out, but in many cases are living in separate houses, where twenty-five are boarded-out under the charge of a foster-mother. You can have exactly the some change with regard to the insane. But that is not the general condition of things in England. It is true that in other unions you find the same melancholy condition of things that has been described by my hon. friends. What is the reason of that? You can erect splendid buildings and make most admirable provision for the poor. But while you can do these things in the big towns where the high rateable value for the district allows it to be done, you cannot do it in small areas where the result of a 1d. rate produces only £50. In those cases the only thing to be done is to get Parliament to make up its mind that there shall be a rearrangement of areas, and you must have regulations which shall apply to county areas whether large or small. I believe there is no reform wanted so much in England, Wales, and Ireland at this moment, and there is no shame so great to our civilisation as the workhouses of the country. I myself brought in a Bill having for its object the rearrangement of the representation of the areas of the country. What was the result? Many Members who, if they had acquainted themselves with the subject, would have supported it, were constrained to oppose it because of the agitation raised in their constituencies. That may be an immoral state of things, but hon. Members will admit that when a constituency has become fully roused, a Minister has great difficulty in persuading his friends to risk that agitation and support him. It is not until you get the support of a Commission that you will get Parliament to adopt the proposal. The Act of 1888 which we carried, it is true followed the recommendations of the Commission, in the redistribution of areas. But that Commission was in actual operation, and its recommendations were in the hands of Parliament before the Act was passed. We were able to set up in 1888 an Act which gave effect to the Report of that Commission which could not have come properly into force for many years to come. It is, therefore, inaccurate to say that advantage has not been taken on this question to make a step forward. The Chief Secretary at Belfast said that this was one of the most pressing needs of Ireland and he has told us that they had not the time to pass such a Bill. But there is an answer to that. Although there is no time to pass this particular Bill, Ministers went through the country last year saying they had carried sixty-five Bills that year, and seventy the year before. The answer is that in connection with a great many of the measures brought in it would be well if the Government considered how far they could be made as little controversial as possible rather than how much they could be made in the interests of one Party. The Chief Secretary could have done much and relief could be given—if Irish Members were united great things could be done. Although the hon. and learned Member for Waterford told us he could not support the Bill he spoke well of it, and said he would not oppose it. What advice I ought to give to my hon. friends behind me I do not know. They are certainly interested in this Bill, which does contain recommendations based on the Report of the Royal Commission. I would advise them to do their best to meet the hon. and learned Member for Waterford, and see if this Commission is to be started that some further consideration is given to its composition. It would be worse than useless unless the Commission commanded support in Ireland. I myself care very little how much of the Bill remains after it has been before a Select Committee, so long as that part of it is adopted which I consider of the greatest importance, namely, the establishment of a tribunal which could inquire and report and give the Government some definite plan. With the authority of such a Commission behind them the Government could come to Parliament next session and bring in a Bill which would be of such a character as to avoid much of the controversy which may otherwise arise. I do not want just now to recall the advantages of the legislation proposed in this Bill. I know that many questions of reform in Ireland are considered of the utmost importance by hon. Members, but surely this question must come before all others. Just take the boarding-out question, for instance, take the children out and educate them in the national elementary schools, or, if there are too many, in separate establishments, and you get rid of that difficulty. Then there is the herding together of people whose pauperism is the result of vice or of physical and mental inferiority, that is a cruel hardship which should be terminated with the least possible delay. Any change of this kind must take time, even though the Bill were allowed to go through this House practically without any opposition at all, for you have to rearrange your areas, make new provisions for buildings, and bring your new law into operation in all the areas, and all that takes time. If a Bill of this kind were passed without opposition this session, it would not be possible to give effect to these reforms under a period of two years. If Clause 6 alone, amended in what way you like, were taken over by the Government, and rearranged so as to make the Commission one they could rely upon, and if they said: "We will send it to a Committee, and insist on such alterations as are necessary, and then we shall at all events prepare the way by this Commission for a large measure of reform for which we will be responsible in another session,"—if that had been the course adopted by the Government, I should have no hesitation in advising my hon. friends not to go to a division on the Second Reading. But they are keenly interested in this question, and I for one deeply regret that our Parliamentary system makes it often the case on a Friday that a question vitally affecting the welfare of our people should be discussed in such an empty House, but that we cannot help. This discussion, such as it is, has been marked by a much greater unanimity and agreement on the common principles of the Bill than you often hear in this House on Irish questions. There has been evinced a profound desire that some definite step should be taken to secure a reform on which we are all agreed, and if my hon. friends decide to press the Second Reading of their Bill, I shall most certainly support them in the lobby, because I believe they will be giving by their votes the only practical effect open to them to their conviction that unless you take some steps, however small, and unless Parliament sets up some tribunal which can give Parliament the information required, you will make no advance on this question, which I regard as one more nearly connected with the happiness of our people—the poorer and more suffering among them—than any other to which the attention of Parliament could be given.

MR. CHARLES CRAIG (Antrim, S) said his colleagues and himself regretted that the Chief Secretary could not see his way to support the Second Reading of the Bill. The hon. and learned Member for Waterford had asked them a definite question, as to whether they looked upon these proceedings as a mere academic discussion of the question or whether they seriously intended to press for the Second Reading of the Bill. He could tell the hon. and learned Member that they did intend to press for the Second Reading of the Bill, if for no other reason than to show how desirous they were that the whole matter of Irish Poor Law reform should be pushed forward. He was unable to follow the Chief Secretary when he informed them that as the Bill was drafted, they really would be gaining nothing if they set up the proposed Commission. The Report of the Commission on which the Bill was founded, on page 76, said that the Commissioners believed that a temporary Commission, working with the Local Government Board and the local bodies, would be necessary for the purpose of carrying into effect the changes incidental to the recommendations made in the Report, and that such a Commission, acting in subordination to the Local Government Board, might discharge the following duties, such as suggesting the areas to be assigned to the various institutions, suggesting the draft scheme for the reapportionment of Parliamentary grants, proposals for the employment of Poor Law officials whose services would be retained and compensation for officials whose services would be dispensed with, and for carrying out the adjustment of various other matters incidental to the changes provided for. The Bill, so far as he could see, followed out that recommendation exactly. It set up a Commission, gave it power to draft schemes, prescribed the method by which notice of those schemes was to be given, and the manner in which they were subsequently to be laid before the Lord-Lieutenant, and, in the absence of objection, to have the force of law by receiving an Order in Council. He did not see how the Chief Secretary could contend that it was necessary to have previous legislation before that could be done. It seemed to him that, even presuming the Chief Secretary was right, he had not given them any good reason why the Bill should not be allowed to go to Committee. All the previous speakers had admitted that the matter was one of urgent importance, which could only be benefited by a free and open discussion. Not one of the Grand Committees was at present occupied with any Bill, and there was, therefore, an excellent opportunity to allow the Bill to be referred to a Grand Committee. His hon. and gallant friend had pointed out that when he was lucky in obtaining a place in the ballot, and when it had been decided between him and his colleagues that this question should be brought before the House in the form of a Bill, it gave them all a considerable amount of anxiety and consideration as to how they should approach the matter. The Chief Secretary had informed them that the form of the Bill was such that it would not carry out their objects. When they came to examine the Report for the purpose of drafting the Bill, they found that it covered a very large area, and it became evident to them that if they wanted to introduce a Bill which would deal in a piecemeal way with the recommendations of the Commission they would not, possibly, get further than dealing with one or two, possibly the least important, points in the Report; and to show how that consideration was borne in upon them, it was only necessary to consider the numerous and complicated matters with which the Report of the Commission dealt. If they had attempted to draft a Bill dealing individually with the various questions considered they would have such questions as the erection of poorhouses and lunatic asylums, the making of areas, the segregation of classes, and outdoor relief; and if they attempted to legislate on those lines it would give them very much more trouble than in legislating for the whole of the case in the method suggested by his hon. and gallant friend. They saw at once that if they were to do anything at all it was necessary to deal with it in a general way, and to set about finding out what was the best way to do so, and his hon. and gallant friend hit upon the precedent to which he had referred. The question of the endowed schools was more controversial than that with which they were now dealing, yet a Commission was set up and dealt with in a most satisfactory way. So far as he could see, there was really no insuperable difficulty in the way. The labour would, no doubt, be very great, but the main questions of this reform were of such a non-controversial nature, and public opinion had so often expressed itself as to the way in which these questions of the segragation of classes, outdoor relief, lunatic asylums, etc., should be dealt with, that there ought at this stage to be very little difficulty for the Commission in dealing with those points. It seemed to him that the Report of the Commissioners was so plain, and that they had covered the whole area so completely, that the work of the Commissioners set up under the Bill would be very greatly simplified. The Report, he would remind the House, had been in the hands of Irishmen since October, 1906, nearly a year and a half, and they might be quite sure that it had been criticised, canvassed, and discussed, not only by every person connected with the Poor Law in Ireland, but also by the public Press, and so far as he knew there had been no serious exception taken to the findings of the Commission in any part of Ireland. It had been pointed out that the recommendations of the Commission had been acquiesced in by both parties in Ireland.

As had been very properly remarked, this was not a question of party at all, and he was somewhat surprised to find that the hon. and learned Member for Waterford was not prepared to support the Second Reading. To him the reasons of the hon. and learned Gentleman seemed to be very slender ones. The hon. Gentleman rested his defection, so far as he could see, on one point, which, after all, could be dealt with in Committee, namely, the composition of the Commission who were to carry out the recommendations of the Report. But the constitution of that Commission could not in any way be called a principle of the Bill; it was a mere point of detail, and his hon. and gallant friend would be glad to receive any suggestion from the hon. and learned Gentleman or from anybody else. They wanted a strong Commission which would have the confidence of all parties. It seemed to him that the question of the composition of the Commission was a matter for arrangement; it was obviously a purely administrative matter. There was no political, religious, or party interest mixed up in it at all, therefore he could not conceive why the hon. and learned Gentleman should feel the slightest difficulty in coming to an agreement as to what the composition of the Commission should be. He thought that the hon. and learned Gentleman ought to have given them his unqualified support in the matter. He had given a certain sort of modified support, but he thought that if the poor in Ireland, and if the consumptives of Ireland who had been so feelingly referred to in the Report, were to be benefited, the hon. and learned Gentleman should have given them his assistance in hastening the passage of what was admitted by all parties to be an absolutely non-political and non-party measure. He had intended to go more fully into the details of the Bill, and particularly he had intended to make some reference to what he considered to be the most pitiable class of persons dealt with by this measure, namely, the consumptives. When they read the Report and found how consumption was increasing in Ireland, whereas it had decreased in the last few years in England and Scotland by 50 per cent.—when they found that in Ireland persons suffering from all stages of consumption were taken to the ordinary workhouses, where they slept in the same rooms with healthy persons and thus spread the ravages of the dreadful disease, he really thought anything which would have the effect of concentrating public attention and the attention of the Government on the question of reform of the Poor Law in Ireland ought to be speedily done. He could not help deeply regretting that the hon. and learned Member for Waterford had not seen his way to join them in this attempt to bring the matter to fruition as soon as possible. The Chief Secretary had given them a qualified promise that next year he would bring in a Bill dealing with this question. Of course they thanked him for that promise, but, unfortunately, they knew that a promise in Parliament, unless it was absolute, was not of much value. If a Minister qualified his promise by such phrases as: "If there was time or opportunity," the promise was not worth a great deal. He hoped that the right hon. Gentleman might be able to carry out his promise, but he could only regret that he had not seen his way to allow the Bill to go through at least another stage, because by so doing any defect that might exist in the measure would have been remedied, and they would then have had more information from the right hon. Gentleman as to the particular line he proposed to pursue when he hiimself brought in a Bill next year.

*MR. SUMMERBELL (Sunderland) said he could not but regret the smallness of the attendance that afternoon, for it did not encourage the initiation of any proposals so far as private Members were concerned. Of course, this was a purely Irish matter, as the Bill did not apply to England, but, inasmuch as a division was to be challenged, he thought it right to say a few words so far as the Labour Members were concerned. He had the fullest sympathy with all that had been said with regard to the necessity for the reforms which were proposed. He regretted the wasteful administration, and it was certainly a disgrace to the country that so much should go in that direction and so little reach the poor. He also regretted that honest men who were out of employment should have to mix with wasters in the workhouses; in fact, the whole system required fresh legislation for its reform. They were hoping that the time would come when the boards of guardians would be done away with and the administration of the Poor Law placed in the hands of the county and borough councils. The Members of the Labour Party, however, did not think that the Bill now under discussion would by the machinery it set up effect the very desirable reforms about which they were unanimous in all parts of the House; but inasmuch as the right hon. Gentleman on the Treasury Bench had promised legislation next year—[Cries of "No; qualified"]—he had heard the speech, and he certainly thought that the right hon. Gentleman was definite regarding the promise of legislation next year which would meet all that the promoters of this Bill desired.

CAPTAIN CRAIG: If such a promise has been made by the Chief Secretary, I certainly accept it at once.

MR. BIRRELL: Of course, I am not in a position to make a definite promise, because I have no control over the business of the House. But I do not complain of the conclusion come to by the hon. Member below the gangway who heard my speech. What I said was that I should do my very best to accomplish that purpose, and I am very confident I shall succeed, but further than that I cannot go.

MR. SUMMERBELL said that in view of a promise of that character and the sympathy which the right hon. Gentleman had in regard to these many reforms which they all desired, he thought the promoters of the Bill would be well advised not to press it to a division. If it were pressed to a division, they on those benches would be obliged to vote against the Second Reading.

MR. BARRIE (Londonderry, N.) said it was with some disappointment that they had listened to the hon. Member who had just sat down. The words of the Chief Secretary had, not without reason, been quoted. Speaking at Belfast on 24th October, 1907, and dealing with this particular question he said—

> "I say the country is ripe and ready for legislation upon those lines, but whether it will be obtained I do not know. All I can say is that if the Irish people would only unite on questions of this kind instead of disuniting upon other questions, good progress for the betterment of the country would be made."

He endorsed the comment of the hon. Member for Waterford, who on 26th October made the following remarks—

> "I confess I read that statement with a feeling of some resentment because that statement, if it meant anything, meant this: That the delay in the settlement of these questions, these social reforms, was due to the action of the Irish people themselves and not due to the fault of the English Government. No man living to-day knows better than Mr. Birrell does how false such a suggestion would be."

The hon. and learned Member, in the same speech, dwelt eloquently and insistently upon the great urgency of the question, and yet that afternoon they had him taking a technical objection to some part of the machinery, which might easily have been got over in Committee, and refusing to lend his influence in supporting the Bill, and thus practically destroying its chance of becoming law. In another speech the hon. and learned Member, after dealing with the housing of the working classes in Ireland, proceeded—

> "I may remind you the Irish Party has already taken action. We have put before the Government our suggestions for the benefit of artisans in towns . . . and we will also put in concrete form our suggestions for the settlement of this Poor Law system."

He ventured to suggest to the hon. and learned Member that he would have no better opportunity than he had enjoyed that afternoon of putting in concrete form whatever suggestions he might have to offer for dealing with that important subject. He had, up till that day, refused to see any political difference in Ireland with regard to this subject, because from one end of the country to the other the Poor Law administration urgently called for reform. Perhaps he might be allowed to give an illustration of what they were suffering by referring to that county a portion of which he had the honour to represent. The Joint Committees of the Coleraine and Magherafelt Boards of Guardians, and several members of the Limavady Board, came together and discussed the whole subject of promoting economy and efficiency, and he would quote very briefly from the Report unanimously adopted by those three boards of guardians. It disclosed the state of things then existing in the county—

> "The average number of inmates in the last half-year for which the figures have been published, gives a total of only 341 inmates; the buildings being certified as providing full accommodation for 2,342 inmates; or, to put it another way, any one of the three workhouses is certified to hold double the number of inmates presently contained in the whole three. For the half-year ending 31st March, 1899, we find what is called the expenses of establishment, which included the cost of four officials, and the maintenance of buildings for the three workhouses, were £1,789, whereas the cost of food and clothing for the whole of the inmates for the like period is only £1,475. Thus we think our system of relief has been greatly abused through our workhouses being so numerous and so convenient. Take the tramp nuisance, for instance. It is in a large measure the creation of a system which provides them with a good temperance hotel at the end of an easy day's journey. With fewer workhouses we may rest assured there will be fewer tramps. We have another class which periodically pass in and out of the workhouses largely because of their being situated so conveniently. We have quite a number of this class, and in our infirmary there are a good many inmates of a class who are quite able-bodied, and who when out of the workhouse misconduct themselves and use our workhouse infirmary solely for recuperative purposes. We are satisfied that were our workhouses some distance from town this class would decrease very rapidly."

He would conclude with a final extract from this Report—

> "And we think the time is not far distant when for the middle and southern portion of the country a small hospital of the most modern type should be erected in an isolated situation with one wing for non-paying patients and with another wing where those who are willing and able to pay for the highest medical skill and nursing would be cared for under the best conditions. Many of us believe many of our county workhouses could with advantage be refitted without much expense as auxiliary ayslums, and that by this means the prospect of a heavy charge for a new county asylum would be altogether done away with."

His object in reading these few extracts from that Report, which was adopted by the three large boards of guardians concerned almost with unanimity, was to give the later history of the movement which he thought showed the urgency for legislation on the subject. The three boards of guardians were practically agreed as to the necessity for closing some of their workhouses, but when the question came to be considered which of the workhouses should be closed, the unanimity was at an end, and until they had legislation such as was proposed by this Bill, they could not make further progress in effecting that great economy The hon. and learned Member in introducing the Bill had referred to it as Utopian, and while gladly supporting it he felt that as regarded some of the minor suggestions that description might be aptly applied. The greatest difficulty in carrying out the recommendations of the Commission would be the admittedly large initial expenditure. He submitted to the House that if the Bill had been allowed to go to a Committee it would have been found practicable to adopt many of the suggestions, the cost of carrying out which would have been comparatively small. Reference had been made, and he was glad to hear it, to the value of the class of cottage hospital which was springing up in different parts of the country. While their county and workhouse hospitals in times past had not been as well equipped, they were not able to do the best medically for their inmates at all times, but a very great improvement in that respect had taken place. He would strongly emphasise that part of the Report which advocated in sparsely populated districts an increase of the number of purely cottage hospitals. He thought that was the most valuable part of the Report. It was not specifically referred to in the recommendations, but a very great improvement, even under the present adverse conditions in Ireland, had taken place since the law gave them lady members of guardians. Their election to the local boards was looked upon somewhat coldly at the start by male members of the boards, but he was bound to say, speaking with practical experience, that the ladies had amply justified the forward movement which had elected them to that service. and they had made their influence felt in many ways; first and chiefly, in ameliorating many of the depressing and unpleasant conditions of workhouse life, and secondly, by bringing skilful attention to the nursing staff of the workhouses and hospitals. In that connection might he also say that during recent years the class of nurses that had been induced to come forward for those positions had also visibly improved, greatly to the benefit of the patients. Lastly, the question had an important bearing on the great scourge of tuberculosis in Ireland. Many of them were anxious that there should be grants in aid for the provision of the necessary sanatoria in groups of counties. There had been a great revival in the movement on that subject in Ireland during the last six months. He was always glad to acknowledge the impetus which had been given to the movement by the Countess of Aberdeen, and it had been greeted in all parts of Ireland with equal enthusiasm. Branches of the Women's Health Association had been founded in the North and South, and there was great hope that in a very short time those who had been stricken with the disease might get out of their heads the prevailing idea in Ireland that there was practically no hope of recovery. If under such a measure as this it was made permissible for county councils to give a small grant in aid for the provision of sanitoria a most valuable work would be done for the whole country. He regretted exceedingly that they had not had a more definite promise from the Chief Secretary. He hoped, in view of the fact that they were so unanimous in the matter, that the right hon. Gentleman would at least feel it his duty to urge upon the Government that that should be the first legislation for Ireland next session. He said that in all sincerity and with the utmost earnestness. The question of deportment had also been touched upon. Their able-bodied men went to England and Scotland, and if they broke down there, without having secured the necessary settlement, they were packed home to Ireland and had to be supported in the workhouses there. That was a real hardship which would be remedied under the Bill. As regarded lunatic asylums the local boards had been feeling the pressure of the burden of getting them up to the necessarily high standard prevailing in all such institutions. In England, of course, they were conducted at very great expense, but he thought in Ireland they had quite as much efficiency at vastly less expense, and he felt that under a reform such as they were now considering their auxiliary asylums might find suitable habitations in the workhouses and make for still greater and substantial economy. He hoped his hon. and gallant friend would persist in going to a division and he should be most happy to support him.

*MR. FETHERSTONHAUGH (Fermanagh, N.) said the reception of the measure by the Chief Secretary had been a little discouraging. When he was taking the Irish Liberal Party on a personally conducted tour through the North of Ireland last summer he advised Irishmen that if they were unanimous on certain matters they would be sure to succeed. Differences were much more common in Ireland than unanimity, but here they had a subject on which, not only were all parties unanimous, but, as was shown by the history given by the hon. Member for Waterford, they had been unanimous for about seventy-five years. It was certainly the only question that he could remember of which anything like that could be said. In 1833 people of such different opinions as the then Lord Castlereagh and Daniel O'Connell were united in their opposition to the Poor Law schemes put forward upon the authority of that execrated individual, Mr. Nicholls. Ever since then every person who had taken any interest in the Poor Law administration in Ireland had been abusing Nicholls, and he had no doubt that had he lived in Ireland he would have been boycotted, but he was wise enough to live in England. Although they had been all the time objecting to his system s one unsuitable to their country, and although they were now agreed that legislation should be introduced to give effect to the recommendations of the Commission which reported so long ago as October, 1906, when they brought forward a Bill it did not receive the support which he thought they had a right to expect from the Government. He quite admitted that the Bill was open to considerable criticism. None of them imagined that it was at all perfect or that it would be likely to become law in its present form, but they were not prepared to differ from the views of Gentlemen below the gangway on any mere question of the *personnel* of the Commission, and that subject might be considered removed from the area of contention. It was necessary to suggest some form for the *personnel* of the Commission in order that the matter might be discussed, but they had never suggested that it was part of the essentials of the scheme. If any proposal had been made by the hon. and learned Member for Waterford to substitute any other persons for Judges of the High Court they would have been glad to agree to it, and he was certain no opposition would have come from the Judges, because he noticed that the Bill did not provide any remuneration for them. Recognising as he did that the Bill would possibly require very considerable alteration, and possibly that it would be inexpedient or impossible to carry it into law this session, he regretted that the Government did not allow it to go as far as Committee, because by discussing it in Committee they might have learnt a great deal as to the views of different parties in Ireland on matters of detail, and many valuable suggestions, no doubt, would have been made. The Government, apparently, would not take that course, and therefore, although they would go to a division, he supposed there was no prospect of securing the Second Reading. He did not propose to deal with matters of detail, but there was one circumstance which reconciled him to the prospect of the Bill's not becoming law, and that was that he would be glad to see it deal more fully with the position of the Poor Law medical officers, which was a disgrace to civilisation. The matter, which was very fully dealt with in the Report, was one of very urgent importance, and he hoped when the Chief Secretary came to frame his measure next session he would give it careful attention. The conditions under which the medical officers were elected were degrading to medical men, and everyone knew that the best men were not secured owing to local narrowness; what was more serious, they were not free agents, and as a result the administration of the Public Health Acts was in a very miserable condition. They had to complain of the sanitary condition of houses owned by the very people to whom they owed their appointment, two whom they looked for continuance in that employment, and to whom they must crawl if they wanted to get a pension at the end of their service however long and meritorious. These conditions were absolutely fatal to the independence and efficiency of the Poor Law medical officers, and he hoped the Chief Secretary would carefully consider their claims and the interests of the public which were very much sacrificed by existing conditions. They would go to a division to show that they were in earnest in bringing the Bill forward, and he hoped that although the Bill got no further it would not have been in vain that they had called attention to and discussed the matter.

Mr. MOORE wanted to say a very few words on the present situation, because undoubtedly there would be very general disappointment in Ireland that no further step had been taken in the matter of these reforms which every section of opinion in Ireland ardently desired. The first and the only practical step that had been recommended by the Commission to which other speakers had referred was the appointment of a temporary Commission, and the only practical step in this Bill was the appointment of such a Commission, and its objects and powers were set out in practically the words of the Vice-regal Commission's Report. That Report, which had been so universally praised, stated that nothing practical could ever be done until a temporary Commission had been appointed, held local inquiries, and prepared schemes Whether there was going to be legislation this year or next or in any succeeding year it was perfectly obvious that that House could never pass a cast iron scheme or rules and regulations for schemes in an Act of Parliament which would apply to the varying circumstances in every part of the country. It was perfectly obvious therefore, to any man of experience in the ordinary working of things, that if these reforms were ever to be brought into force it would only be by a local system under which a Commission could go through the country, hold inquiries, and prepare schemes adapted to local needs and approved by local agreement. It being the beginning and end, the Alpha and Omega of the Report, that a temporary Commission should be appointed, and that being the practical thing in this Bill, he thought when that was refused they should understand on whose heads the responsibility lay and from whom the objection came. They had heard a good many professions of sympathy for the Bill, and at the same time they found a Member of the Party opposite trying to count out the House. That was a typical example of Liberal sympathy with Irish reform. The objection raised by the hon. and learned Member for Waterford was that no member of the Commission was to be popularly elected. There would have been no difficulty on the part of the promoters in meeting that objection. That was much too small a peg upon which to hang the rejection of the Bill, which was simply proposing to carry out the most practical recommendation of the Viceregal Commission. The Chief Secretary for Ireland did not want the Bill because it came from the Unionist Benches.

MR. BIRRELL: No, no.

MR. MOORE said the only objection the right hon. Gentleman had raised to the Bill was on account of the expense. He did not think the Chief Secretary ought to raise that objection at a time when he was increasing the Irish Estimates by £85,000 and was going to spend another £200,000 on University education in Ireland. The objection taken by the Chief Secretary was that the expenditure under the Bill would be enormous, and that it would be useless. It was true that the period fixed for the Act to remain in operation was five years, but they would in most cases be able to find out in twelve months whether local agreement was likely to be brought about. They might appoint the Commission for one year instead of five, and that might be a perfectly reasonable Amendment to make. As to the objection that it was going to be enormously expensive, he would point out that two out of the five Commissioners would not receive any remuneration at all. He presumed that one member of the Commission would be an experienced Civil servant representing the Local Government Board, and that would leave two members for one year to be paid. If they paid two members of the Commission £600 a year each, £500 to a secretary and allowed £1,000 for expenses, that would amount to £2,700. At any rate, £3,000 would be ample, and that was the enormous sum which the Chief Secretary stated would prevent the Government giving effect to the Bill with the object of which they professed to sympathise. That was a shabby excuse—a flimsy excuse to make for rejecting it, although it was on all fours, and practically word for word, with the Report of the Viceregal Commission. By reason of the attitude of the Government they could not get any farther with the Bill. Disappointed people would still see infirm old paupers herded with an undesirable class, mothers of illegitimate children were still to be allowed to contaminate the virtuous in the same institution, and all the evils about which all those acquainted with the social system of Ireland were crying out would be permitted to go on because this Bill was introduced from the Unionist Benches, and because the Government would not risk a sum of £3,000 to carry out what every thinking man in Ireland desired. They on the Unionist Benches had not been fairly treated. It was one of the many instances in which the Government had turned a deaf ear to an Irish demand.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 35; Noes, 89. (Division List No. 71.)

AYES.

Anstruther-Gray, Major
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt. Hn. Sir H.
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Barrie, H. T. (Londonderry, N
Beckett, Hon. Gervase
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bowles, G. Stewart
Butcher, Samuel Henry

Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Corbett, C. H. (Sussex, E. Grinst'd
Craig, Charles Curtis (Antrim, S.
Craig, Captain James (Down, E.)
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Fetherstonhaugh, Godfrey
Fletcher, J. S.
Gretton, John
Helmsley, Viscount
Hunt, Rowland

Kimber, Sir Henry
Lambton, Hon. Frederick Wm.
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Dublin, S
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
MacCaw, William J. MacGeagh
M'Calmont, Colonel James
Magnus, Sir Philip
Moore, William
Morpeth, Viscount
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens

Remnant, James Farquharson
Renton, Major Leslie
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Williams, Col. R. (Dorset, W.)
Younger, George

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Viscount Valentia.

NOES.

Ashton, Thomas Gair
Baring, Godfrey (Isle of Wight)
Barker, John
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Barnes, G. N.
Barry, Redmond J. (Tyrone, N.)
Bennett, E. N.
Bethell, Sir J. H. (Essex, Romf'rd
Birrell, Rt. Hon. Augustine
Bowerman, C. W.
Brigg, John
Brocklehurst, W. B.
Burns, Rt. Hon. John
Cameron, Robert
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Causton, Rt. Hn Richard Knight
Channing, Sir Francis Allston
Cherry, Rt. Hon. R. R.
Collins, Stephen (Lambeth)
Collins, Sir Wm. J. (S. Pancras, W
Dobson, Thomas W.
Duncan, C. (Barrow-in-Furness
Foster, Rt. Hon. Sir Walter
Gill, A. H.
Grant, Corrie
Hart-Davies, T.
Higham, John Sharp
Hobart, Sir Robert
Holt, Richard Durning
Hope, John Deans (Fife, W.
Howard, Hon. Geoffrey

Hudson, Walter
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Kekewich, Sir George
Kelley, George D.
Laidlaw, Robert
Lamont, Norman
Lough, Thomas
Macdonald, J. R. (Leicester)
Macdonald, J. M. (Falkirk B'ghs
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J
Mallet, Charles E.
Massie, J.
Masterman, C. F. G.
Menzies, Walter
Morton, Alpheus Cleophas
Napier, T. B.
Nicholson, Charles N. (Doncast'r
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
O'Grady, J.
Parker, James (Halifax)
Perks, Robert William
Price, C. E. (Edinb'gh, Central)
Price, Robert John (Norfolk, E.
Radford, G. H.
Raphael, Herbert H.
Rees, J. D.
Roberts, Charles H. (Lincoln)
Roberts, G. H. (Norwich)
Robson, Sir William Snowdon
Rogers, F. E. Newman

Rowlands, J.
Runciman, Walter
Russell, T. W.
Rutherford, V. H. (Brentford)
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland
Schwann, C. Duncan (Hyde)
Scott, A. H. (Ashton under Lyne
Shaw, Rt. Hon. T. (Hawick B.)
Smeaton, Donald Mackenzie
Spicer, Sir Albert
Stewart, Halley (Greenock
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Summerbell, T.
Tennant, Sir Edward (Salisbury
Torrance, Sir A. M.
Verney, F. W.
Wadsworth, J.
Waring, Walter
Wason, Rt. Hn E (Clackmannan
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney
Waterlow, D. S.
White, Sir George (Norfolk)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whitehead, Rowland
Whitley, John Henry (Halifax)
Wilson, P. W. (St. Pancras, S.)
Wilson, W. T. (Westhoughton)

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Whiteley and Mr. Herbert Lewis.

CORONERS' INQUESTS BILL.

Order for Second Reading read.

MR. **HIGHAM** (Yorkshire, W.R., Sowerby) in moving the Second Reading said that the object of the Bill was a very simple one. The present state of the law was that the jury must view the body, however repulsive it might be or however great the danger from infection. The essence of the Bill was that the viewing should not be compulsory as provided by the Act of 1887, but optional at the discretion of the coroner. There might be cases in which the viewing of the body was essential, but the experience of a good many years and the opinion of many coroners was favourable to such an alteration in the law as was foreshadowed by the Bill. He had known cases where infectious diseases had been transmitted through the act of viewing a body. In many cases the viewing of the body under the present law was a mere pretence, for they kept as far away from the body as they possibly could, and that was a breach of the oath they took. The object of the Bill was quite in harmony with the whole tendency of modern times, because the compulsory viewing of a body was almost on a level with the idea of public executions and other barbarous methods in vogue centuries ago. With the option given to the coroner to avoid possibilities of going wrong, and other safeguards, he thought the House might safely and advantageously pass the Bill which he had now the honour of moving.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Higham.*)

*MR. LUKE WHITE (Yorkshire, E.R., Buckrose) said the Bill had been before Parliament for several years. In 1897 a Committee of the House reported in favour of doing away with the compulsory viewing of bodies by coroners' juries. His experience as a coroner had induced him to introduce the Bill two years ago. Three-fourths of the coroners in the country were in favour of the Bill. The measure did not do away with the viewing of the body in cases where the coroner or a majority of the jury considered that a view was necessary. He had received a great many letters from coroners, doctors, and jurymen, and, so far as he could gather, opinion throughout the country was almost unanimous in favour of passing the Bill. He could give instances which would assure the House that it was cruel to compel jurymen to view bodies. None could speak better regarding the measure than the members of the Labour Party. He had had communications from a great number of trade unions in districts where frightful catastrophes had taken place, and where jurymen were obliged to examine bodies in conditions under which the duty ought not to be imposed upon them. He hoped the House would read the Bill a second time.

SIR F. BANBURY (City of London) said he had listened to the two hon. Members who had spoken in favour of the Bill in the hope that he should hear some valid arguments in its support, but the only argument which they had brought forward was that coroners' juries should not be compelled to perform the disagreeable duty of viewing bodies. He was not surprised that the hon. Member who moved the Second Reading should advance that argument, but he was rather surprised to hear it from the hon. Member for Buckrose Division, who was himself a coroner. It was not, he contended, a valid reason for asking the House to pass the Second Reading of the Bill to say that it was disagreeable for the jury to perform their duties. There were many duties cast upon men in this country, and in all countries, which were disagreeable, but which they had to carry out. One of the conditions of having the franchise was that the electors had to act as jurymen. Hon. Gentlemen below the gangway were always insisting that everybody ought to have the franchise, and yet, while people exercised the privileges of the franchise, there was an objection on the part of some to discharge the disagreeable duties connected with it. No doubt it was disagreeable for coroners' juries to view bodies, but it did not at all follow that they ought to shirk that which was disagreeable. He had always understood that the more disagreeable a thing was the more willing a person should be to carry it out, if, by so doing, he was assisting the welfare of the country. He had a letter from a coroner telling him that it would be a very great obstacle to the detection of crime if the compulsory viewing of the body by the coroner's jury was abandoned. He himself did not pretend to be able to say whether that statement was well founded or not, but it had been sent to him unsolicited. It seemed to him to have some probability of being correct. He was not in the House at the time the law was passed, and he did not know what the object was, but he presumed that the object was that there should be additional means placed before the jury for determining whether or not a crime had been committed. The viewing of the body went a long way in that direction. The hon. Member for the Buckrose Division said that the Bill, supposing it became law, would not prevent the coroner from insisting upon the jury viewing the body if he thought it necessary that they should do so. His answer to that was that there would be cast upon the coroner a very unpleasant and invidious duty.

*Mr. LUKE WHITE: Or a majority of the jury.

Sir F. BANBURY said that a majority of the jury could demand to view the body, but the Bill provided that they could only do so "at the first sitting of the inquest." He had no hesitation in saying that in many of the cases where an inquest was held, the real facts as to the cause of death were not disclosed until the second or third sitting.

*Mr. LUKE WHITE said a body could not be interred without a burial certificate.

Sir F. BANBURY said the hon. Member was well aware that there had been many cases in which burial certificates were given, and, later on, when the bodies were disinterred, it was found that the burial certificates were absolutely incorrect. If the hon. Member founded his case on the burial certificates, why have any inquest at all? The coroner could insist on the jury viewing the body, according to Clause 1 of the Bill. If the jury considered it unnecessary that they should view the body, there might be a wrangle between the jury and the coroner as to whether or not the body should be viewed. He believed he was correct in saying that there had been on many occasions unseemly wrangles between coroners and juries.

Attention called to the fact that forty Members were not present.

*Mr. SPEAKER: The recent division has shown that considerably more than forty Members are in attendance.

Sir F. BANBURY said the jury in the case he had supposed would go to view the body, not with the idea of giving a proper verdict on the question, but with their minds rankling because the coroner had forced them to do something which was in their opinion unnecessary. The hon. Member who moved the Second Reading had referred to cases in which jurymen had deliberately made excuses for not going on a jury. The fact that jurymen did not like to go through the disagreeable duty of viewing the body was not a valid reason for not serving on a jury. He was sorry the Bill had come on now, for he thought it cast a lurid light on the motives which actuated juries. Of late he had not had that confidence in juries which Englishmen were supposed to have, and, if the statements which the hon. Member had made were correct, he would have no confidence in them at all. He would hesitate to introduce any change in the law which would cast doubt on the integrity of juries, and on their determination to do their duty, however disagreeable the duty might be. He did not see the object of the Bill unless the promoters, while wishing to abolish the viewing of the body altogether, did not like to go so far as to say so. The Bill might not appear to have that object, but that would be the ultimate effect. It was evident from what the hon. Member for the Buckrose division had said that he would not ask a jury to view a body unless he had grave suspicion that serious foul play had occurred. It might be very difficult for the hon. Member to form an opinion as to how death came about until he had heard all the evidence, and it might be then too late to view the body. Inquests were often protracted, and he would like to know what advantage a jury would gain by viewing a body four weeks after death when in all probability marks of foul play would have disappeared owing to the process of decomposition. All that showed the disadvantage of legislation by private Members on a Friday afternoon when, as the last division showed, there were only

124 Members in the House. He ought to have added Mr. Speaker, who unfortunately was debarred from taking part in the debates. He had not the slightest doubt that Mr. Speaker would have been on his side if he had been able to take part in the debate. There were 545 Members of the House who did not in the least know what was going on. [An Hon. Member: That is their fault.] Yes, that was their fault. He would point out that of the 500 Members of the Government and their supporters only eighty-nine had attended the discussion of a measure which had for its object the amendment of the system of Poor Law administration in Ireland, and of the Bill now before the House in regard to coroners' inquests, which after all affected the great body of the working classes. Hon. Gentlemen below the gangway had better not call attention to the lax manner in which the followers of the Government were performing their duty. To sum up, his objections to the Bill were, first, that investigations into crime might possibly be prevented; secondly, that if the coroner endeavoured to force the jury to view the body under this Bill, he would have an extremely difficult duty to perform, because the jurymen would consider that they had been forced by the coroner to do something which they were not bound to do; and thirdly, that anything which would relieve people from the discharge of a disagreeable duty, simply because it was disagreeable, ought not to be allowed. The tendency of modern times was to do nothing that was unpleasant; to take no trouble to do anything; to put all responsibility on other people's shoulders; to work only eight, six, or even less hours, whereas the tendency in the old days was for a man to do work to the utmost of his capacity. That was what ought to be the spirit nowadays, and he regretted that the old energy once characteristic of the English race had departed, and that the old ideal "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might," was now supplanted by: "Do as little as you possibly can." Under these circumstances he hoped the Bill would not have a Second Reading.

*The UNDER-SECRETARY of STATE for the HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. Herbert Samuel, Yorkshire, Cleveland) said that the hon. Baronet's argument seemed to amount to this, that so long as a task was disagreeable it ought to be imposed in order to strengthen the national character, and, further, that crime might not be detected unless the body was viewed by the coroner and his jury.

Sir F. BANBURY said that what he had stated was that he had received a letter, quite unsolicited by him, from a coroner who gave utterance to the opinion that crime would not sometimes be detected unless the body was viewed.

*Mr. HERBERT SAMUEL said that the cases in which the crimes were detected by viewing the body by the jury must be excessively rare. He had gathered from the more eloquent passages in the speech of the hon. Baronet that in his opinion the discharges of a disagreeable duty tended to the virility of our national character. Be that as it might, there was undoubtedly a very strong body of public opinion in support of this Bill. The duty of viewing the body at an inquest was a very disagreeable one, and at times it might become far more than disagreeable—exceedingly painful in particular cases. Moreover, there was a certain risk of infection, rare he admitted, in viewing the body in cases where death had been caused by infectious disease. Another drawback to the existing system which, though slight, should not be left out of account, was that it frequently entailed on busy men like coroners and members of juries a very considerable and quite unnecessary waste of time. The places where the inquests were held were often in a different locality from those in which the bodies were lying. An adjournment therefore had to be made from the court-house to the mortuary, and the amount of time occupied by the coroner and jury over an inquest might be doubled or trebled. Again, where large juries had to be brought together, burials in some cases might have to be delayed owing to the custom of viewing the body, and that might be a very great disadvantage and even prove to be a public danger. For all these reasons there was undoubtedly a strong case to be made for the Bill. On the other hand, there was not in his view, any powerful argument to be advanced against it. The chief objection to the proposed change was that the present system did make the juries take a serious view of their functions, or at any rate it tended to do so. Coroners' juries, it was true, were sometimes inclined to regard their duties too lightly, and that tendency was counteracted by the somewhat solemn ceremony of viewing the body. But, apart from that, there was very little to be said against the change. The argument had been advanced that it was an ancient custom and ought not to be lightly abolished. The office of coroner was indeed one of the most ancient in the State; its origin was lost in the mists of antiquity. The hon. Baronet opposite said that he was not in the House when the law establishing this practice of viewing the body by the coroner's jury was passed. That was very true, for it dated probably from before the Norman Kings, sometime between the reign of Alfred the Great, and William the Conqueror; and the hon. Baronet, though an old Member of the House, was not quite so old as that. The purpose for which the custom was originally established was that the neighbours might be called together to identify the body of a person who had died, the jury being regarded as the representative men of the neighbourhood. Further, in those simple days the average man was as well able to declare what was the cause of death as anyone else. Both of those functions were obsolete and useless now, because the cases in which the juries were acquainted with the person whose body they were called upon to view were very rare; and in these days no jury would venture, merely from their own observation from viewing the body, to say what was the cause of death. He found that the Coroners' Society was in the main in favour of this change, and the hon. Member for Buckrose, who had been a coroner himself, and than whom no one was better entitled to express an opinion, shared that view, and supported the Bill. For all these reasons the Government saw no objection to the Second Reading of the Bill, and carrying it a stage further by sending it to a Committee upstairs for further consideration. The proposed exemption of the coroner as well as of the jury from the duty of viewing the body was a matter which should be very carefully examined in Committee before Parliament was asked to accede to it. Then it was said that a majority of the jury should have the right of demanding that the body should be viewed; whether that right should not be conferred on a smaller proportion would require to be considered. In dealing with this matter they were touching one aspect of a somewhat complicated body of law His right hon. friend the Home Secretary had long since had his attention called to the working of the law relating to coroners' inquests and the possibility of its amendment in many directions, and he had had under consideration the advisability of appointing a Committee to inquire into various matters—whether it was necessary to have so many jurors as twelve, the methods by which the juries were now summoned, whether unnecessary inconvenience was sometimes caused under existing arrangements, whether in some cases juries might not be dispensed with altogether, whether the discretion of coroners as to holding inquests might be enlarged beyond what the law now allowed, how coroners' salaries were paid—in boroughs they were paid by fees and in counties by salaries—and which was the best method in the interests of the administration of the law. All these were matters which demanded inquiry. But perhaps more important than all was the suggestion that coroners should be empowered to hold inquests, not only in cases of death, but also in cases of fires which did not result in death. That suggestion had been urged on the Government by the Association of Municipal Corporations, and the Association of Chambers of Commerce. In the City of London there was at the present time an Act in operation which permitted the City coroner to hold investigations on his own initiative or when rapuested by the Lord Mayor or certain other personages; and many inquests had been held, the causes of fire had been discovered, and valuable suggestions made for the better protection of property. It was a question for consideration whether the coroner was the right person to undertake such inquiries, or whether it should be some other official, and whether a jury should sit with him, or expert assessors. These and other questions of detail called for investigation and settlement. Therefore, though there was no objection on the part of the Government to this Bill passing into law, perhaps in a modified form, if it failed to do so the subject would not be lost sight of, but would form a subject of consideration for the Committee to which he had referred.

*SIR WALTER FOSTER (Derbyshire, Ilkeston) said that twenty years ago he had introduced a somewhat similar Bill, and he thought it would be clearly in the interest of the juries, of the coroners, and of the public at large that this measure should receive a Second Reading and go to a Committee upstairs for detailed consideration. The duties of coroners' jury were numerous and onerous, and it was the duty of the House to do its utmost to lighten those duties in a way which would not conduce to public injury. From a long experience of coroners' courts and juries he had felt the very serious inconvenience and trouble to which juries were put in attending inquests and viewing bodies. In all cases the duties were troublesome and disagreeable, and in many instances loathesome. He thought that the hon. Baronet had taken a far too narrow view of the question, and he was afraid that the hon. Baronet had never attended a coroner's court, or acted as a juryman. If he had, he would have had a better idea of the difficulties which arose than was indicated by the speech which he had made. There were three grounds on which he thought this Bill should pass into law. In the first place, the duty of viewing the body was a disagreeable task to impose in all cases on men who were giving their time and money in order to perform a public service; and if they could make that service less objectionable the House was bound to do so. In the second place, it exposed these men to possible infection, and that was by no means such a small danger as had been represented by some of the speakers. And in the third place, the duty of viewing the body was an exceedingly painful one, from which the jurors might well be spared, especially in cases of accidents in mines and factories, when the mutilated body of a comrade had to be viewed. The Bill which he brought in in 1888 had then the support of the great majority of the coroners of the country, and when a body of men like these came to the House with a request for a change in the law they ought to recognise that their opinion was worthy of attention and respect. When three-fourths of the coroners of the country came to the House with a suggestion of that kind, as in the case of the present Bill, they ought to consider it. When the Bill went into the Committee it could be improved, and he thought the responsibility should still remain with the coroner to view the body upon which he was to hold the inquiry. The jury, however, stood in quite a different position. He did not think the House ought to postpone this useful Bill which so many of the coroners of the country supported.

VISCOUNT HELMSLEY (Yorkshire, N.R., Thirsk) said the House had had the advantage of hearing three speeches in favour of the Bill, including that of the Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department. But those speeches contained only the one argument that the viewing of the body was a disagreeable and painful duty. The Under-Secretary it was true had advanced the argument that viewing the body might expose the jurymen to the risk of infection, but those cases surely must be very few and far between, because in the majority of cases where death ensued from infectious diseases there was no coroner's inquest, and burial took place upon a medical certificate. Even if that were not so, it would be easy to take precautions against infection. It was quite possible to arrange that such a body should be viewed through glass or in some other manner by means of which there would be prevented any exposure to infection. That it was a painful and disagreeable duty to jurymen no one would deny, nevertheless he agreed with the hon. Baronet and did not think the argument was sufficient to do away with such an ancient custom, and if that was the only argument in its favour he should vote against the Bill. The Under-Secretary having mentioned that argument in its favour proceeded to mention others which were stronger in opposition to the Bill. It was surprising that after he had mentioned those he did not conclude by saying the Government could not support the Bill, and asking the House to vote against the Second Reading. The hon. Gentleman pointed out that the duty gave the jury a serious view of their functions, and that taken alone was a very strong argument against the Bill. It was most important that jurors, upon whose verdict depended perhaps the discovery of a criminal, should have the importance of their functions impressed upon them. If the viewing of a body had that effect it was an exceedingly important part of the coroner's inquest. But there might be in this very ancient law a sounder reason for its continuance. The Under-Secretary had said it was not necessary for the purposes of identification; that no jury nowadays could identify the body, that others identified the body and no jury could say what the cause of death was. But the object of the law originally was to make quite certain that there was a body of a person whose death it was necessary to investigate. Everyone knew that there were cases of conspiracy to be considered. Supposing a man desired that it should be believed that he was dead when in fact he was not, and that he could get a sufficient number of corrupt people to aid him in his object, if the viewing of the body were done away with he would have no difficulty in carrying out his purpose. The viewing of the body being done away with the thing would become very easy. It was not a case that would often occur, but that it might occur everybody knew from what had taken place in a recent case. He did not suggest that the jury would not be above suspicion. It was for that reason that he desired that they should continue to view the body. He wished to prevent a corrupt witness coming forward and saying he had drawn the dead man out of the water, for instance, and others saying they had seen the body. That might have been one of the reasons why the viewing of the body was imposed upon the jury and why it was retained upon the Statute-book when the Coroners' Acts were consolidated in 1877. The Under-Secretary of State had given a stronger reason still against the present Bill being passed. He had said there were many points in Coroners' Acts that needed amendment — that the whole question needed a Committee of inquiry in order to see in what way they could be best amended. He could not, therefore, see the object of passing this measure, which would only deal with a fraction of the question, when very shortly, as the Under-Secretary of State had said, the whole question would have to come up for review. Of course, if the Bill was to be referred to a Committee of the Whole House, no possible harm could result from its being read a second time. If, on the other hand, it was to be referred to a Committee upstairs, then he thought it would be a great waste of time to send to a Committee a Bill which in the opinion of the Government was not very desirable, especially when the Committees had plenty of work to do in examining and discussing other matters which were of some importance. If the suggestion that the Bill should be amended in such a way that the coroner should always be compelled to view the body were acted upon a great part of his objection would disappear, and had the Bill been introduced in that fashion he would perhaps not have been prepared to oppose it.

*MR. C. DUNCAN (Barrow-in-Furness) said he had himself had some experience on inquests, and although the House had been told that the viewing of the body induced jurymen to take a serious view of the inquest, so far as his experience went there never was any flippancy displayed by the people empannelled upon the juries, or any suggestion that they were not likely to take as serious a view of their functions as any Member of the House. He thought the Bill was an extremely modest one and had a very reasonable object. Some of the duties which fell upon those who sat upon juries were of an extremely loathsome character. The case quoted by the hon. Baronet where at the first meeting of the jury one juror was taken so ill that the body could not be viewed for some weeks was one of the strongest arguments in favour of the Bill. Accidents also happened. Supposing an accident happened in a mine and a large number of men were killed. In such places the community was a very small one, and it seemed to be a pitiful thing to compel a jury sitting on an inquest of such a kind to look at the bodies, very often of their friends, torn, burnt, and riven in all directions. Then let them take the case of a man who had been drowned. He knew of such a case where the body had been in the water three months. Could anything be more loathsome than to compel a jury by law to view a body of that kind which had been bloated and swollen to three times its natural size? Hon. Members who had opposed the Bill had had no experience of these things, and therefore should be the last to oppose such a measure. If they had had his experience they would have been strongly in favour of the Bill. The hon. Baronet had told the House that hon. Members below the gangway would be unable to reply to his argument: there might be some truth in that, for he did not think anyone would be able to reply to him until votes were granted to women and women sat on the floor of the House.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 118; Noes, 45. (Division List No. 72.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Asquith, Rt. Hn. Herbert Henry
Baring, Godfrey (Isle of Wight)
Barker, John
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Barnes, G. N.
Beale, W. P.
Bennett, E. N.
Bethell, T. R. (Essex, Waldon)
Birrell, Rt. Hon. Augustine
Boland, John
Bowerman, C. W.
Branch, James
Brigg, John
Brocklehurst, W. B.
Burns, Rt. Hon. John
Cameron, Robert
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Causton, Rt. Hn Richard Knight
Channing, Sir Francis Allston
Cherry, Rt. Hon. R. R.
Collins, Stephen (Lambeth)
Corbett, C H (Sussex, E. Grinst'd
Crean, Eugene
Delany, William
Devlin, Joseph
Dobson, Thomas W.
Donelan, Captain A.
Duncan, C. (Barrow-in-Furness
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)
Fletcher, J. S.
Flynn, James Christopher
Foster, Rt. Hon. Sir Walter
Gill, A. H.
Gladstone, Rt. Hn Herbert John
Grant, Corrie
Griffith, Ellis J.
Gwynn, Stephen Lucius
Hayden, John Patrick
Hobart, Sir Robert
Holt, Richard Durning
Hope, John Deans (Fife, West)
Hudson, Walter
Illingworth, Percy H.
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kekewich, Sir George
Kelley, George D.
Kilbride, Denis
Laidlaw, Robert
Law, Hugh A. (Donegal, W.)
Lehmann, R. C.
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, Rt. Hon. David
Lyell, Charles Henry
Macdonald, J. R. (Leicester)
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
MacVeagh, Jeremiah (Down, S.
MacVeigh, Charles (Donegal, E.)
Mallet, Charles E.
Masterman, C. F. G.
Meehan, Francis E. (Leitrim, N.
Menzies, Walter
Montagu, E. S.
Mooney, J. J.
Morrell, Philip
Morton, Alpheus Cleophas
Muldoon, John
Murphy, John (Kerry, East)
Murray, James
Nicholson, Charles N. (Doncast'r
Nolan, Joseph
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
O'Brien, Kendal (Tipperary Mid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Doherty, Philip
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Grady, J.
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Pearce, Robert (Staffs, Leek)
Phillips, John (Longford, S.)
Price, C. E. (Edinb'gh, Central)
Price, Robert John (Norfolk, E.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Roberts, G. H. (Norwich)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Roche, John (Galway, East)
Rogers, F. E. Newman
Russell, P. W.
Rutherford, V. H. (Brentford)
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland
Seaverns, J. H.
Shaw, Rt. Hon. T. (Hawick B.)
Summerbell, T.
Tennant, Sir Edward (Salisbury
Torrance, Sir A. M.
Ure, Alexander
Verney, F. W.
Wadsworth, J.
Walters, John Tudor
Wason, Rt. Hn. E (Clackmannan
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney)
Waterlow, D. S.
White, Sir George (Norfolk)
White, Patrick (Meath, North)
Whitehead, Rowland
Whiteley, Rt. Hn. G. (York, W.R
Wiles, Thomas
Wills, Arthur Walters
Wilson, P. W. (St. Pancras, S.)
Wilson, W. T. (Westhoughton)

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Higham and Mr. Luke White.

NOES.

Acland-Hood, Rt Hn. Sir Alex. F
Anstruther-Gray, Major
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt. Hn. Sir H.
Beckett, Hon. Gervase
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Boulton, A. C. F.
Bowles, G. Stewart
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord R. (Marylebone, E.)

Collins, Sir Wm. J. (S. Pancras, W
Craig, Charles Curtis (Antrim, S.
Craig, Captain James (Down, E.)
Dixon-Hartland, Sir Fred Dixon
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Du Cros, Arthur Philip
Fell, Arthur
Fetherstonhaugh, Godfrey
Gretton, John
Hamilton, Marquess of
Harrison-Broadley, H. B.
Haslam, Lewis (Monmouth)
Kimber, Sir Henry
Lamont, Norman
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Dublin, S.
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
MacCaw, William J. MacGeagh
Moore, William
Morpeth, Viscount
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Pickersgill, Edward Hare
Remnant, James Farquharson
Ronaldshay, Earl of
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smeaton, Donald Mackenzie
Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, East)
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Talbot, Rt. Hn. J. G. (Oxf'd Univ
Thornton, Percy M.
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Waring, Walter
Williams, Col. R. (Dorset, W.)
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E.R.)
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Viscount Helmsley and Sir Frederick Banbury.

BALLOT ACT (1872) AMENDMENT (No. 2) BILL.

Order for Second Reading read.

MR. DUNN (Cornwall, Camborne) formally moved the Second Reading.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

CAPTAIN CRAIG said that the Motion had taken hon. Members entirely by surprise, and he considered that it was not very courteous to the House of Commons at ten minutes past four o'clock on a Friday afternoon to introduce so important a Bill in such a summary fashion. A Bill of this kind ought to be introduced by the Government or with Government sanction. He felt very strongly on the point and there were a large number of hon. Members who took a considerable interest in the Bill, in regard to which very divergent opinions were held. Did the promoters of the Bill think they would get the measure through the House any sooner by such discourteous treatment? It was not as if it were late at night and it was necessary to resort to such tactics. To the best of his ability he should show the House what they would be doing if they allowed the Bill to go through. The feeling on that side of the House was that the principle might be satisfactory, whereas, in the case of some constituencies, there was a fairly equal division of opinion. The case of Croydon would, he thought, be a very good example. At the last general election the figures showed 8,200 Unionists, 7,200 Liberals and 4,100 Labour voters. In cases of that sort the Bill would undoubtedly introduce no great hardship. But there were cases in which great hardship would occur, and he was glad to have the opportunity of quoting the figures in a city which was the opposite case to that of Croydon. In West Belfast, where at the last general election they had a very close contest, or one which would have proved a very close contest but for a certain occurrence, they had 4,138 Nationalist voters, the Unionist candidate polled 4,122, and they had a nominee of the present Government polling 153.

MR. STANLEY WILSON (Yorkshire, E.R., Holderness) called attention to the fact that forty Members were not present.

House counted, and forty Members not being present—

The House adjourned at twenty-five minutes after Four of the Clock till Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Monday, 6th April, 1908.

BARON HOTHAM.

Petition of Frederick William, Baron Hotham, in the Peerage of Ireland, claiming a right to vote at the elections of Representative Peers for Ireland, read, and referred to the Lord Chancellor to consider and report thereupon to the House.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The Lord Chancellor acquainted the House, That the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificates from the Examiners that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with:—Finchley Urban District Council; Bury and District Joint Water Board; Dublin and South-Eastern Railway; Seaham Harbour Dock; City of Glasgow.

The same was ordered to lie on the Table.

Alliance and other Assurance and Insurance Companies Bill [H.L.]; Wath-upon-Dearne Urban District Council Gas Bill [H.L.]. (Petition for additional Provision.)—Examiners' Certificates of non-compliance with the Standing Orders referred to the Standing Orders Committee on Thursday next.

Bognor Gas Light and Coke Company Bill [H.L.].—Reported, with Amendments.

Swansea Valley Gas Bill [H.L.].—Reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments.

Cardiff Railway Bill [H.L.].—Read 3ª, and passed, and sent to the Commons.

Hull and Barnsley Railway Bill; Dartford Gas Bill.—Brought from the Commons, read 1ª, and referred to the Examiners.

Herne Bay Pier Bill [H.L.].—Returned from the Commons agreed to.

PETITIONS.

LAND VALUES (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition in favour of: Of Glasgow Liberal Council; read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND).

Memorandum on nature study and the teaching of science in Scottish schools.

KINGSTOWN HARBOUR.

Correspondence relating to the use of Kingstown Harbour by the vessels of the London and North-Western Railway Company.

IRISH MAIL SERVICE.

Correspondence relating to the arrangement made in 1898 for the acceleration of the Irish Day Mail Service, and the revision of the same in the present year.

TRADE REPORTS: ANNUAL SERIES.

No. 3968. Belgium (Antwerp).

INDIA (USE OF GOVERNMENT CHURCHES IN INDIA).

Papers relating to the use for Presbyterian services of garrison churches in India which have been consecrated for the services of the Church of England.

ARMY.

Approximate estimate of expenditure under the Military Works Acts of 1897, 1899, 1901, and 1903.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION (RULES).

Rules dated 26th March, 1908, supplemental to and amending the Rules dated 16th March, 1897, 19th March, 1900, 17th May, 1901, 14th March, 1902, and (provisional rules), 4th December, 1903.

Presented (by command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

CRIMINAL APPEAL (RULES, 1908).

Additional rule made, with the approval of the Lord Chancellor, by the

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

Lord Chief Justice and the Judges of the Court of Criminal Appeal.

SUPERANNUATION.

Treasury Minutes, dated 3rd April, 1908, declaring that: (1) Samuel Shannon, artificer, Royal Small Arms Factory, Enfield; (2) George G. Bishop, lad, Royal Gun Factory, Woolwich, were appointed without Civil Service certificates through inadvertence on the part of the heads of their respective departments.

GOVERNMENT INSURANCES AND ANNUITIES.

Account of all moneys received on account of contracts for the grant of deferred life annuities and for payments on death, and of the disposal thereof; and of the contracts made for the year ended 31st December, 1907.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

LOTTERIES AND INDECENT ADVERTISEMENTS.

Message from the Commons that they have ordered that the Committee appointed by them to join with the Committee of this House to consider and inquire into the law on the said subject, do meet the Lords Committee in the Chairman of Committee's Committee Room, To-morrow at Three o'clock, as proposed by their Lordships.

COMMITTEE OF SELECTION.

Leave given to the Committee of Selection to report from time to time. First Report with an Appendix made, and to be printed. (No. 47.)

STANDING COMMITTEE.

Report from the Committee of Selection for the Standing Committee that they have added the Earl of Stamford to the Standing Committee. Read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

THE RESIGNATION OF THE PRIME MINISTER.

*THE LORD PRIVY SEAL (The Marquess of RIPON): My Lords, it is my sad task to inform your Lordships that the Prime Minister has considered it his duty, owing to the prolongation of his grave illness, to resign his office, and that the King, under the circumstances, has been graciously pleased to accept his resignation. I am sure that all your Lordships will share my deep regret that the career of Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman as Prime Minister should be thus suddently brought to a close. This is not the occasion to recount his services to the country or his claim to public gratitude. His short career as head of the Government has been remarkable for the singular influence which he obtained over the House of Commons. Other eminent statesmen have exercised great influence in that Assembly, none more so in recent years than Mr. Gladstone. But Mr. Gladstone's power was based upon his commanding eloquence and his vast experience of public affairs, and was mingled, if I mistake not, with a certain feeling of awe; whereas the influence of Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman was, if I may say so, of a tenderer kind. His perfect temper, his earnest sympathy with the feelings and principles of his Party, his unfailing courtesy to his opponents gave him an unrivalled hold on the most critical Assembly in the world. By these qualities and by their results he will be best remembered by the public. But we who have been his colleagues for two years and a half are bound to him by yet closer ties; for his constant fairness, his untiring patience, and his considerate guidance have won for him the gratitude and affection of all those whom he associated with himself in the immense responsibilities attaching to the Government of this great Empire. I ought to say that, after the Army (Annual) Bill has been read a third time and passed, I propose to move that this House do adjourn until Tuesday, the 14th of this month. It is proposed to meet then in order that the Royal Assent may be given to the Army (Annual) Bill. That, I think, is in accordance with precedent. The Government is no longer constitutionally in existence. The retirement of the Prime Minister puts an end in that sense to the Government of the time; and I do not think that any persons holding their office on so slight a tenure ought to take on themselves the conduct of any important business in Parliament.

The Marquess of LANSDOWNE: My Lords, the noble Marquess need not be afraid that any jarring note will be sounded upon this side of the House. We all of us greatly regret that Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, owing to considerations of health, should find it necessary to vacate a position which he has earned by many years of honourable exertion, and without any adventitious aids. He has filled that position, as we know, to the entire satisfaction of his own followers; and he has filled it not only without giving offence to his opponents, but in such a manner as to attract to himself a great deal of sympathy and admiration on account of that invariable good temper and courtesy to which the noble Marquess referred just now, and on account of his sound knowledge of our Parliamentary traditions. We all of us sympathised with Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman when last year his health broke down, partly, no doubt, owing to an overwhelming private sorrow, partly owing to the strain and stress of official life. We all of us rejoiced when for a time he was able to resume the burden of office and of public work; and now we all of us feel for him when the moment has come when he finds it inevitable that he should lay aside that burden. It is, I may say, the universal hope of this House that Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman may be spared to enjoy during the declining years of his life a share of that repose for which we know he has so often yearned, and to which, I am afraid, he has been so complete a stranger.

ARMY (ANNUAL) BILL.

Read 3ª, and passed.

ADJOURNMENT.

The Marquess of RIPON: My Lords, I move that this House do now adjourn until Tuesday, 14th April. I may as well say that after that formal meeting I shall propose that the House do adjourn until Tuesday, 5th May, as originally proposed.

House adjourned at twenty minutes before Five o'clock, till Tuesday, 14th April.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Monday, 6*th April*, 1908.

The House met at a quarter before Three of the Clock.

NEW WRITS.

New Writs,—for the County of Kincardine, in the room of John William Crombie, esquire, deceased. — (*Mr. Whitely.*)

County of Derby (Western Division) right hon. Victor Christian William Cavendish, now the Duke of Devonshire, called up to the House of Peers.—(*Sir Alexander Acland-Hood.*)

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS NOT PREVIOUSLY INQUIRED INTO COMPLIED WITH.)

Mr. **Speaker** laid upon the Table Report from one of the examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto, have been complied with viz., — Camberwell and other Metropolitan Borough Councils (Superannuation) Bill [Lords]. Pontypridd Water Bill [Lords]. Audenshaw Urban District Council Bill [Lords]. Fishguard and Rosslare Railways and Harbours Bill [Lords]. Merthyr Tydfil Corporation Bill [Lords]. North British and Mercantile Insurance Company Bill [Lords].

Ordered, that the Bills be read a second time.

Dartford Gas Bill,—read the third time, and passed.

Herne Bay Pier Bill [Lords],—read the third time, and passed, without Amendment.

Draycott Gas Bill, Gosport Gas Bill, Humber Commercial Railway and Dock Bill, Leeds Corporation Bill, Leicester Corporation Bill, Motherwell Burgh Extension, etc., Bill, North Eastern

Railway Bill, Wishaw Burgh Electricity, etc., Bill, as amended, considered, to be read the third time.

Interoceanic Railway of Mexico Bill [Lords]; London County Council (Tramways and Improvements) Bill [Lords]. Read a second time and committed.

Rhymney Railway Bill [Lords]. Read a second time, and committed.

PETITIONS.

COAL MINES (EIGHT HOURS) (No. 2) BILL.

Petitions in favour: From Britain Lodge Colliery; Broughton Moor; Camerton Pit; Denby; Heanor; Ilkeston; Marlpool; Outfield Pit; Ripley; Tupton Pit; Waingroves; and West Hallam; to lie upon the Table.

FACTORS ACT (1889) AMENDMENT BILL.

Petition from Huddersfield, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSING BILL.

Petitions against: From Arksey; Bacup; Balby (two); Bampton; Barnby Don (two); Barrow-in-Furness; Bentley (two); Berwick-upon-Tweed; Bolton-on-Dearne; Bradford-on-Avon (two); Braithwell; Bromsgrove; Coombe; Cassington; Chard; Conisborough; Deal; Devizes; Doncaster (three); Everton Bawtry; Hallamshire (two); Hammersmith; Handborough; Hatfield (two); Kidlington; Leicestershire; London; Luton (two); Marlborough; Marston; Micklebring; Misterton; Newark-on-Trent; Norham-on-Tweed; North Lonsdale; Nutwell; Parkgate; Parkstone; Pewsey; Putney; Rotherham (five); Stainton; Stoke-sub-Hampdon; Sutton; Swindon; Taunton; Thorne; Tickill (two); Westbury; West Wilts; Wolvercote; Workington; and Yeovil; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSING BILL.

Petitions for alteration: From Bacup; Cleckheaton; Temperance Committee of the United Free Church of Scotland; Walker; and Westerhope; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSING BILL.

Petitions in favour: From Abercarn (two); Aberfeldy; Allenheads; Ayr; Bailiffe Bridge; Batley; Bedford; Birkenhead; Brixton; Bury (three); Calstock; Cambuslang; Chalbury; Clapham; Clydebank (two); Crediton; Dalmuir; Deeside; Dolton; Eccles; Elland; Elton Bury; Fakenham: Gotham; Halifax; Hayson Bridge; Heatherlands; Hightal; Hyson Green; Keswick (three); Laisterdyke, Larkhall (two); Leicester; Lemington; Lutterworth; Lytham; Maryport; Melton Mowbray; Milnathort (two); Minsterley; Newport (Mon.); Niggenhall; Oakengates; Pendoggett; Pitlochry; Poole; Portobello; Preston Brook; Radcliffe (two); Rishton; Rosneath; St. Columb Minor (two); St. Dogmaels; Sheffield (five); South Devon and East Cornwall; South Tottenham; Stapleton; Stockport; Streatham; Studham; Swindon; Styal; Shillington; Torrington; Trequite St. Kew; Wadebridge; Wellington; West Bridgford; Westerhope; West Kilbride; West Witton; Winchester; Witheridge; and Workington; to lie upon the Table.

LIQUOR TRAFFIC (LOCAL OPTION) (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petitions in favour: From Aberfeldy; Culbokie; Eaglesfield; and Glasgow; to lie upon the Table.

MERCHANDISE MARKS BILL.

Petition from Huddersfield, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

PUBLIC-HOUSE (EXCLUSION OF CHILDREN) (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Lauder, in favour; to lie up the Table.

SALE OF FOOD AND DRUGS ACTS (AMENDMENT) (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition of the Association of County Councils Soctland, against; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQOURS ON SUNDAY BILL.

Petitions in favour: From Crosskeys; and, Kilburn; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

IRISH MAIL SERVICE.

Copy presented, of Correspondence relating to the arrangement made in 1898 for the acceleration of the Irish Day

Mail Service and the revision of the same in the present year [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

IRISH MAIL SERVICE (KINGSTOWN HARBOUR).

Copy presented, of Correspondence relating to the use of Kingstown Harbour by the Vessels of the London and North Western Railway Company [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

SUPERANNUATION ACT, 1884.

Copies presented, of Treasury Minutes, dated 3rd April, 1908, declaring that George E. Bishop, lad, Royal Gun Factory, Woolwich; and Samuel Shannon, artificer, Royal Small Arms Factory, Enfield; were appointed without a Civil Service Certificate through inadvertence on the part of the Heads of their Departments [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

GOVERNMENT INSURANCES AND ANNUITIES.

Account presented, of all Moneys received and of the disposal thereof, and of all Contracts for the grant of Deferred Life Annunites and for Payments on Death made during the year 1907 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 117.]

IRISH LAND COMMISSION (RULES).

Copy presented, of Rules dated 26th March, 1908, supplemental to and amending the Rules dated the 11th March, 1897, 19th March, 1900, 17th May, 1901, 14th March, 1902, and (Provisional Rules) 4th December, 1903 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

EAST INDIA (USE OF GOVERNMENT CHURCHES IN INDIA).

Copy presented, of Papers relating to the use for Presbyterian Services of Garrison Churches in India which have been consecrated for the Services of the Church of England [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

ARMY (MILITARY WORKS).

Copy Presented, of Approximate Estimate of Expenditure for the year 1908–9, under the Military Works Acts of 1897, 1899, 1901, and 1903 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND).

Copy presented, of Memorandum on Nature Study and the Teaching of Science in Scottish Schools [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

TELEGRAPH (CONSTRUCTION) BILL.

Order [2nd July, 1907] for a Return relative thereto, and Orders that the said Return do lie upon the Table and be printed, read and discharged.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Distress for King's Taxes.

MR. MACLEAN (Bath). To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether collectors of Income-tax, Schedule A, and of house duty, have uncontrolled discretion to levy distraints for the non-payment of these taxes; whether such collectors are practically independent of the control of the surveyors of their districts; and, if so, will he consider the advisability of issuing such regulations as will bring the collectors under the effective control of the surveyors, with the view of avoiding unnecessary levies of distraint on poor people such as at present occasionally occur.

(*Answered by Mr. Asquith.*) Collectors of taxes are not independent officials, but are responsible for the manner in which they perform their duties to the District Commissioners of taxes, to whom any complaints as to their conduct should be addressed. The only authority exercised by surveyors over collectors of taxes is the indirect one of reporting any complaint as to the conduct of any collector to the District Commissioners, who are required to summon a meeting for the consideration of the matter and to take whatever measures may be thought necessary. The collectors are expressly enjoined and required by the Commissioners' warrants to distrain in cases where payment of taxes is not made on due demand, and the surveyor can only intervene where there is an objection to a charge on some specific ground rendering necessary an appeal to the District Commissioners. In view of the necessity for maintaining the independence of the District Commissioners, it is not desirable that their executive officers should be placed under the control of the officials of the Board of Inland Revenue. I am not aware of the existence of "unnecessary levies of distraint on poor people," but any case of the kind would be a proper occasion for complaint to the Commissioners, who have full power to deal with it.

Licensed Houses at Codicote.

Mr. BARNARD (Kidderminster): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer at what figure the "Sawyer's Arms" and the "Queen" beerhouses at C dicote were in Schedule A prior to their abolition under the 1904 Act; and at what figure are the same premises in Schedule A at the present time.

(*Answered by Mr. Asquith.*) Prior to the abolition of the licence, the Schedule A assessment was £18 in the case of the "Sawyer's Arms" and £12 in the case of the "Queen." The effect of abolishing the licence was to leave the assessment unaffected in the case of the "Sawyer's Arms," and to increase it from £12 to £19 in the case of the "Queen."

Pay in Provincial Post Offices.

Mr. COURTHOPE (Sussex, Rye): To ask the Postmaster-General whether the scale of pay in provincial post offices is fixed with reference to the gross volume of work at the office in question or the volume of work per member of the office staff; and whether he will so revise the scale that the volume of work per man is taken into account.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) The classification of provincial post offices for the purpose of scales of pay is based on the total volume of work at the office, modified where necessary by the cost of living. This arrangement is in accordance with the recomendation of the Select Committee on Post Office servants.

Customs Lower Section Clerks.

Colonel SEELY (Liverpool, Abercromby): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury what was the average increase in salary, during the last twelve months, on promotion of Customs lower section clerks to clerks upper section, and of assistants to second class examining officers, respectively; and whether any revision of the scale of pay is in contemplation.

(*Answered by Mr. Runciman.*) The average increase in salary, during the year ending the 31st ultimo, of clerks of the second class, lower section, promoted to the upper section, was £82. 6s., and of assistants promoted to second-class examining officers was £11 10s. No revision of the scale is in contemplation.

Fife Coal Company.

Mr. T. F. RICHARDS (Wolverhampton, W.): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the proceedings at the inquest upon the bodies of the three workmen who were killed by an explosion at the colliery of the Fife Coal Company, Scotland, and to the evidence given at the inquest by the fireman in charge of the district in which the explosion occurred, to the effect that he was only nineteen years of age, and had been employed at the colliery for three months; that it was part of his duty to start the electric motor, but that he had no knowledge of electricity; that he had no previous experience of a colliery in which locked safety lamps were used, and had not received any instructions upon the use of a safety lamp; and that he had not seen the Coal Mines Regulation Act, or the special rules in force at the colliery, and had no knowledge of them; and whether, having regard to these admissions, he will say what steps he proposes to take to protect the miners of this country from the dangers they are exposed to by the appointment of incompetent firemen?

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) Yes, Sir. My attention has been called to this accident, and I have received reports from the mines inspector with regard to it. I am informed that McGinn, the man referred to in the Question, was not the regular fireman in charge of the district, but was asked in an emergency to make the inspection. McGinn was of the age stated, but was in training for the duties of a fireman, and according to the information given me had experience of gas and safety lamps. No electrical knowledge was required for starting the motor, which was done by moving a switch handle. It does not appear that the employment of McGinn was the cause of the accident;

but the whole question of the competence of firemen is under the consideration of the Royal Commission on Mines who, I am informed, have taken a considerable body of evidence on the subject.

Liquor Trade.—Mortality Statistics.

MR. CHARLES ROBERTS (Lincoln): To ask the President of the Local Government Board if he will grant the Return relative to Liquor Trade (Mortality Statistics), notice for which stands on to-day's Paper.

(*Answered by Mr. John Burns.*) I presume that my hon. friend desires this information as regards England and Wales only. If so, I think the best way will be that I should give him some particulars on the subject in the form of an Answer to an unstarred Question. I will communicate with him with regard to the matter.

Landless Cottars.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): To ask the Secretary for Scotland in view of the fact that the Government have stated that they are fully alive to the desirability of improving the position of the landless cottars in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, will he state when it is proposed to take measures to attain that end, especially bearing in mind that cottars and fishermen were not mentioned in the Small Landholders (Scotland) Bill.

MR. WEIR: To ask the Secretary for Scotland if he will consider the expediency of introducing an Amendment of the Congested Districts (Scotland) Act, 1897, so as to admit of Section 4 of the Act being so construed as if the improvement or rebuilding of dwelling-houses and other buildings in congested districts, and the constitution of new holdings and the enlargement of holdings in congested districts, were respectively purposes specified in that section.

(*Answered by Mr. Sinclair.*) In reply to my hon. friend's Questions, I can only repeat my reply of 2nd April, to which I would beg to refer. If by the latter part of my hon. friend's Questions he intends to imply that cottars and fishermen were not eligible to benefit by the provisions of the Small Landholders (Scotland) Bill, I can only repeat the assurance already given to him on numerous occasions that such apprehensions have no real foundation. Cottars and fishermen would have been eligible for benefit under the Bill equally with all other classes.

Island of Vatersay.

MR. EUGENE WASON (Clackmannan and Kinross); To ask the Lord Advocate whether he or his Department have done anything to encourage or sanction the alleged violation of law and order in the island of Vatersay; whether he advised the Secretary for Scotland that Lady Gordon Cathcart should take the remedies open in a civil court to prevent invasion of her rights in the island; and, in view of the charges made against him, whether the advice tendered was in accordance with precedent.

MR. GULLAND (Dumfries Burghs): To ask the Lord Advocate whether Lady Gordon Cathcart was informed that the proper course, as advised by the law officers of the Crown in regard to the Vatersay squatters, was for her to proceed in the ordinary way by interdict against them; and whether her agent urged the authorities to take criminal proceedings, contrary to the advice received, in order to save her Ladyship trouble and expense.

(*Answered by Mr. Thomas Shaw*) I propose to answer these two Questions together, and I have to ask the indulgence of the House in making a somewhat full reply. It is not usual to ask a Law Officer what advice he has given to a Department, and it would be irregular to enter upon the law of the case. In the special circumstances, and looking to certain charges made against the Government, I may be allowed, however, to say that it is the fact that the Secretary for Scotland was advised by the Law Officers of the Crown that the proper course to prevent invasion of civil rights in Vatersay was for the proprietor to take the remedy of interdict in a civil court with the consequent proceedings (in the event of the interdict not being obeyed) of a petition for breach thereof. The advice was completely in accord with precedent and, I may add, with practice. In the language of Lord Justice Clerk Moncreiff: "A proprietor is entitled to prevent strangers coming on his ground. That is his right; and persons who come upon his ground must show their legal right to be there, otherwise he is entitled to exclude them. Trespass constitutes in the general case a civil wrong and not a criminal act, and the proprietor's remedy is by civil writ or action of damages." The present Lord Justice Clerk, while Lord Advocate, apprised this House of the same principle of administration in Scotland in this form: "That every man must defend his own property or we must turn every person sworn to be a trespasser into a criminal. The law in this free country (Scotland) says 'No' to that. It says that if a man trespasses on the property of another he can only be turned out on the operation of a civil court, and the owner of property has to suffer any damage done that may occur during the time necessary for that operation, because this is a free country, and because we believe that everybody will submit to the jurisdiction of those courts." This law is elementary, and familiar to all acquainted with Scottish procedure; and it is difficult to understand the state of mind which, by reason of its being followed, has produced the totally baseless charge against the Government of encouraging or sanctioning violation of the law. With reference to the next Question, I have to admit that Lady Gordon Cathcart was informed by the Secretary for Scotland that he had been advised as above; and I deeply regret to have also to admit that she by her agent did bring forward the question of difficulty and expense to herself, and urged the Secretary for Scotland that the Scottish Office should proceed at once and criminally against squatters on her lands, although advised to a contrary effect by the Law Officers of the Crown. This course, which would have been one of the grossest impropriety, was declined. The House, perhaps, will allow me to add that a congestion of poor and landless people on this property, in close proximity to considerable tracts of land alleged to be available for small holdings, not unnaturally produces difficulties. Two recent facts increase those difficulties: (1) All private appeals and all the suggestions of public authorities to make land in Vatersay available for small holdings have, as the House will see from the White Paper (30), been refused by Lady Gordon Cathcart, but the rejection by the House of Lords of the Small Holders Bill, which would have provided a remedy, increases the gravity of the position; (2) during the course of the correspondence the landlord has let the whole of Vatersay and two other islands—in all over 3,000 acres in extent—to one tenant on a lease of nineteen years, with a break at ten years. The interdict case, which, after much delay, has been proceeded with, is still *sub judice*, and it would be improper for me to make any comment upon it; but I may be allowed to express the earnest hope that all writs will be served, and these and the law in every respect obeyed, without disturbance, or attempt at, or threat of, disturbance. As to charges against the Lord-Advocate, I say nothing; most of them, it will be seen, arise from pure ignorance.

Income Tax—Relief for Married Couples

SIR WILLIAM BULL (Hammersmith): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he will, in his next Finance Bill, carry out the promise made on 10th December, 1906, that he would give consideration to the suggestion that additional relief should be granted to married couples, and especially to married couples with families.

(*Answered by Mr. Runciman.*) The promise referred to was given and fulfilled, in connection with the Budget of last year. The question is one which my right hon. friend will continue to bear in mind, but he cannot say anything on the subject of the forthcoming Budget.

Estates of Deceased Persons.

COLONEL LOCKWOOD (Essex, Epping): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether the arrangement signed by Mons. Cambon and himself, regarding the estates of deceased persons in France and in England, which has been published in the Journal Office in Paris, has been published in England; and whether the six articles of the arrangement will be officially communicated to Parliament or not.

(*Answered by Mr. Runciman.*) Instructions are being given for the publication of the text of the Convention as a Parliamentary Paper at an early date.

Irish Land Stock.

MR. GEORGE FABER (York): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer what steps he proposes to take in regard to financing Irish land purchase, in view of the Report of the Departmental Committee to the effect that further public issues of Irish Land Stock should not be made while the stock stands at its present discount; whether he can state how much of such stock has been purchased by the National Debt Commissioners for the Savings Banks; what is the amount of money temporarily lent by the Commissioners, out of cash balances in their hands, for the purpose of the Land Purchase Fund; and whether the income arising from the land purchased has proved sufficient to pay the dividends on the Land Stock issued and also the interest on the sums borrowed from the Commissioners.

(*Answered by Mr. Runciman.*) A statement will be made at an early date. The National Debt Commissioners at present hold £5,912,893 guaranteed 2¾ per cent. Stock for the Savings Banks funds, and have made temporary advances to the amount of £859,000. The income derived from tenants' purchase annuities has not hitherto been sufficient to pay he dividends on stock issued and the interest on money temporarily borrowed. It has been necessary to draw upon the Guarantee Fund to make good the deficiencies.

Irish Land Purchase Finance.

MR. LONSDALE (Armagh, Mid.): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he can state when he will be in a position to announce the conclusions of the Government in reference to Irish land purchase finance; and what opportunity the House will be given of discussing the matter.

(*Answered by Mr. Runciman.*) My right hon. friend is not yet in a position to fix a day, but an opportunity for full discussion will be afforded at an early date.

Price of Sugar.

MR. HAROLD COX (Preston): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he is aware that the wholesale price of sugar has recently risen very greatly, and is now far in excess of any price reached during the last eight years except in the year 1905; and whether, in view of the burden which this high price entails upon the poorest people of this country and upon great manufacturing industries, he will make provision in his next Budget for abolishing the sugar tax at an early date.

(*Answered by Mr. Runciman.*) My right hon. friend is aware that there has been a considerable increase recently in the market price of sugar, and he will not fail to take all relevant facts into consideration when the Budget is being prepared. He cannot, however, say anything at this stage with reference to the attitude of the Government to any particular proposal affecting taxation.

Killyliss Evicted Tenant.

MR. FETHERSTONHAUGH (Fermanagh, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Estates Commissioners have received any application from John Dickie, evicted in 1884 from his farm in Killyliss, county Fermanagh, for reinstatement under the Evicted Tenants Act; and whether they have taken any steps to reinstate him.

(*Answered by Mr. Cherry.*) The Estates Commissioners received an application from John Dickie on 28th August last, but have not yet been able to consider the case, having regard to the priority of the numerous similar applications received. The Commissioners will inquire into the case in due course, but are not at present in a position to say at what date.

Ballymote Evicted Tenant.

MR. O'DOWD (Sligo, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Estates Commissioners have received from Mrs. Catherine Heally, of Ballymurray, Ballinacarrow, Ballymote, county Sligo, an application for reinstatement in the holding on the Percival estate from which her late husband was evicted in 1882; whether her case has been investigated by an inspector from the Estates Commissioners' office, and, if so, what steps, if any, are being taken in the matter.

(*Answered by Mr. Cherry.*) The Estates Commissioners have received and investigated the application in question, and have decided to take no action in the matter. The applicant is already in possession of about twenty-five acres of the farm from which her husband was evicted, and the remainder is in occupation of another tenant.

Clanricarde Tenancy.

MR. JOHN ROCHE: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the planters or new tenants upon the Clanricarde estate are protesting against the delay in compensating them and reinstating the old tenants; whether the delay is due to Lord Clanricarde's appeal against Judge Wylie's decision; and whether the Government will take steps to expedite the hearing of the appeal, as otherwise the land will be useless for agricultural purposes for this year both to the present occupiers and the incoming tenants.

(*Answered by Mr. Cherry.*) The Estates Commissioners are unable to proceed further in this case until the questions of law involved in it have been disposed of. The matter is pending before the Court of Appeal in Ireland, and every effort will be made to have the case decided as soon as possible.

Richmond Constabulary Barracks.

MR. LONSDALE: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the auxiliary training depot for the Royal Irish Constabulary at Richmond Barracks is to be discontinued; and, if so whether he will state the reasons for this step and the nature of the arrangements to be made for the accommodation of the recruits in training.

(*Answered by Mr. Cherry.*) The loan of quarters at Richmond Barracks was obtained in order to provide for the training of constabulary recruits specially enrolled for the purpose of augmenting the force in proclaimed counties, and as such training has now been completed the quarters will shortly be given up to the military authorities. There is sufficient accommodation at the constabulary depot for the training of recruits ordinarily enrolled.

Manchester Estate Evicted Tenant.

MR. LONSDALE: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the application for the reinstatement of Samuel Rainey, an evicted tenant on the Manchester estate, county Armagh, has been before the Estates Commissioners for five years; whether two inspectors have reported that the case is a suitable one for reinstatement; whether there is any obstacle, except the opinion of the Estates Commissioners that the price asked by the present tenant of the holding is excessive; whether the Estates Commissioners are aware that the present tenant bought the farm at auction with the object of assisting Rainey to regain possession, and is willing to give it up if he is recouped the price he paid, although the farm would fetch considerably more in the market; whether the Estates Commissioners would be warranted in taking the whole or part of the purchase money from the reserve fund, in accordance with Mr. Justice Wylie's judgment of 25th February last in a similar case on the Clanricarde estate; and whether the Estates Commissioners will either restore Rainey to his former holding or provide him with a new holding of equal extent.

(*Answered by Mr. Cherry.*) I beg to refer the hon. Member to the Answers given to his Questions on this subject on 10th and 17th July last, to which the Estates Commissioners have practically nothing to add. The Commissioners understand that the reserve fund can be applied to assist in the restoration of evicted tenants, but they must exercise their own discretion as to the amount which can reasonably be expended in effecting the restoration of any particular evicted tenant.

Drumkeerin Tenantry.

MR. MEEHAN (Queen's County, Leix): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware thas the tenants on the estate owned by Mrs. Tate, Miss Rutledge, and Mr. M'Loughry, and situated near Drumkeerin, in the county of Leitrim, had, after lengthened negotiations, agreed to purchase their holdings on terms offered by the agent, but that owing to one of the landlords refusing to accept the terms agreed upon the tenants were proceeded against by civil bill process and put to considerable expense; and whether, under the circumstances, the Estates Commissioners will intervene with the object of preventing further legal expense and bringing about an amicable arrangement of sale.

(*Answered by Mr. Cherry.*) The Estates Commissioners have no knowledge of the matters referred to in the Question, which appear to relate to preliminary negotiations for sale and purchase between the landlords and tenants. The Commissioners do not appear to have been approached by any of the parties, but if they should be so approached they will consider whether the case is one in which they can usefully offer their services as conciliators under the Lord-Lieutenant's regulations.

Claims for Malicious Injury.

MR. LONSDALE: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will state the number of claims for compensation for malicious injury to property adjudicated upon in Ireland during the years 1906 and 1907, respectively, and the three months ended 31st March, 1908; the total amount of compensation awarded and particulars of the injuries for which compensation was given; and whether, in respect of these cases, any persons were made amenable under the criminal law.

(*Answered by Mr. Cherry.*)—

Claims adjudicated upon in undermentioned periods.

Period.	Number of claims.	Amount awarded.	Number of cases in which persons were made amenable.
		£	
1906 - - - - -	500	6,531	36
1907 - - - - -	504	10,538	43
March Quarter, 1908 -	170	7,480	16

Particulars of Injuries for which Compensation was given.

Period.	Malicious burnings.	Injury to crops.	Breaking windows.	Gates, walls, fences, &c.	Houses and furniture.	Spiking meadows and injuring farm implements.	Killing or cutting cattle.	Cattle-driving.	Miscellaneous.	Total.
1906 - - - - -	191	20	98	22	29	8	51	2	23	444
1907 - - - - -	198	17	86	21	47	11	40	2	32	454
March Quarter, 1908 -	65	5	18	16	5	7	17	15	4	152

Liability for Accidents on Irish Public Roads.

MR. LARDNER (Monaghan, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that according to recent decisions of the Irish Courts county councils are responsible to persons using public roads in Ireland for accidents occurring to them through defects in the highway, and that if county councils insure against third-party risks the Local Government Board auditor surcharges the councillors authorising payment of the amount paid as premiums on such insurance; and will he inquire into this matter, the authority for such surcharge, and take such steps as may be necessary to enable county councils in Ireland to obtain the benefit of the protection of third-party insurances.

(*Answered by Mr. Cherry.*) The Answer to the first part of the Question is in the affirmative. The Local Government Board have already advised the county councils of counties in which the contract system of road maintenance is in operation to insert a clause in the contractor's bond making him and his sureties responsible for any accident that may occur owing to the defective condition of the roads during the continuance of his contract. Where this is done the question of insuring against third-party risks would appear to be one for the contractor. In counties in which the roads are kept by direct labour the county councils are directly responsible, and it rests with them to consider whether they should protect themselves by insurance. The Local Government Board understand that the county councils are considering the matter, but the premiums to be paid in a large county would be so heavy that some of the councils seem more inclined to take the risk themselves than to pay the annual premiums. No surcharge of the nature referred to in the Question has yet been made.

New Belfast University.

SIR JOHN RANDLES (Cumberland, Cockermouth): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, having regard to the fact that the new University in Dublin is to be under Roman Catholic control and with a Roman Catholic atmosphere, and that the new University in Belfast is to be under Presbyterian control with a Presbyterian atmosphere, what provision is proposed for the higher education of the Methodist community in Ireland, numbering about 70,000 persons.

(*Answered by Mr. Cherry.*) My right hon. friend asks me to say that the two new Universities to be created in Ireland will, like the existing one, be entirely open to Methodists, and my right hon. friend has no doubt that students of this denomination will be able to create an atmosphere of their own in any University to which they may go.

Mansfield Estate, East Donegal.

MR. C. MACVEIGH (Donegal, E.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to a dispute on the Mansfield estate, Killygordon, East Donegal, between George Diver and his landlord as to a part of his holding known as the Wood; whether the matter is now before the Commissioners; if so, will he direct that the inspector to be sent shall inquire into the past rent of this wood and who paid it for the last seventy years, and as to how and why it was taken away from George Diver; and whether, seeing that this wood is now lying waste. will he take some steps to have Diver reinstated in this part of his holding, and compensated for the timber that was cut and carried away before the sale of the estate is completed.

(*Answered by Mr. Cherry.*) The Estates Commissioners inform me that no proceedings for the sale of the Mansfield estate are pending before them, and they have no information as to the dispute referred to in the Question.

Sheffield Volunteer Artillery.

MR. STUART-WORTLEY (Sheffield, Hallam): To ask the Secretary of State for War, whether, as part of the Territorial Army scheme for the West Riding of Yorkshire, a proposal was privately or otherwise made to the officer commanding the Sheffield Volunteer artillery that Sheffield should provide three batteries of field artillery and one battery of horse artillery, with mounted brigade ammunition column; whether that officer's readiness to undertake the provision of such a force was ascertained; whether, in view of the fact that the Sheffield Volunteer artillery have, for many years past, had an establishment of four batteries armed and drilled as field artillery, and that this corps was eulogised by the Secretary of State for War on account of its high state of efficiency, testified to by General Lyttelton, Colonel May, C.B., C.M.G., and Colonel Wing, C.B., it is intended to carry into effect the proposal above described as communicated and accepted; and, if not, whether any other, and what, arrangement is to be made, and for what reason.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) When the provisional scheme for the Territorial Force was first issued the local military authorities discussed with the commanding officers the various ways in which the units might be raised, and, amongst others, Colonel Allen, the officer commanding 4th West Yorkshire Royal Garrison Artillery, was asked whether he would be prepared, if required, to raise the horse artillery battery. The General Officer Commanding-in-Chief, after fully considering the question, ascertained from Lord Fitzwilliam that he was prepared to raise the battery, and this proposal was endorsed by the County Associations unanimously. It is the policy of the Army Council to accept recommendations made in this manner as to the allocation of units. Colonel Allen is one of the ablest and most energetic of the Volunteer artillery commanding officers, and it is the desire of the military authorities to make the fullest use of his remarkable abilities. In order to complete the establishment of the new Territorial Field Artillery Brigade which he is to command, seven officers and 173 other ranks have still to be raised.

Case of Michael Tierney of the Connaught Rangers.

MR. DUFFY (Galway, S.): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether his attention has been directed to the case of Michael Tierney, Athenry, county Galway, 5884, Connaught Rangers; whether he is aware that Tierney has been a Reservist since 1903; whether his pay has been stopped on the application of the local constabulary; and whether he will make inquiry into the circumstances, with a view of restoring to him the pension he is entitled to as a Reservist.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) This matter will be referred to the General Officer Commanding-in-Chief in Ireland, and the result of the inquiry will be forwarded to the hon. Member.

Army Contracts Return.

MR. A. L. STANLEY (Cheshire, Eddisbury): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether the Return, made by his Department, of contracts given abroad for the last financial year is comparable with that made in previous years, or whether the latest Return contains items which are for the first time included in that Return, though such articles have in the past actually been ordered from abroad; whether copper and condensed milk have, as a matter of fact, been obtained from abroad for some years past, though these articles appear for the first time in the Return made last year; and, if those articles have been so obtained, whether he can give any information showing to what extent they have been so obtained.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) As stated in the footnote, the Return was amplified to cover all foreign imported goods classed as manufactures in the Board of Trade monthly accounts of trade and navigation in the United Kingdom. Among the items consequently included for the first time are copper ingots and condensed milk. The value of the latter purchased from abroad in earlier years cannot be given without considerable investigation. The purchases of copper for the five years ending 31st March, 1907, amount to over £550,000 in value.

Old Colonial Audit Branch of the Exchequer.

MR. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether the nominated members of the old Colonial Audit Branch of the Exchequer and Audit Department had to undergo any educational test before being admitted to the branch; whether he can state what were the subjects of examination and standard of proficiency required; and what public authority examined them in these subjects.

(*Answered by Mr. Runciman.*) The conditions of appointment to the old Colonial Audit Branch were fully explained to the hon. Member in the replies given to his Questions of 6th March, 1906.

MR. FIELD: To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he will state the total number of candidates nominated for admission to the old Colonial Audit Branch of the Exchequer and Audit Department from the time of its formation to its recent amalgamation with the Exchequer and Audit Department, and the total numbers rejected through inability to pass the medical test and the educational test, respectively.

(*Answered by Mr. Runciman.*) Candidates were not nominated until they had satisfied the Comptroller and Auditor-General as to their health and educational qualifications. The total number nominated was sixty-two. No record is kept of the number of applicants who failed to obtain nomination.

MR. FIELD: To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether the nominated members of the old Colonial Audit Branch in London were admitted without passing a Civil Service examination or obtaining a Civil Service certificate, without pension rights, and on a scale of salary, £70—£5—£100, etc., the same as the Second Division scale; whether these members are now allowed to enter the newly-amalgamated Colonial Audit Branch and Exchequer and Audit Department as examiners with a Civil Service certificate without passing a Civil Service examination, with pension rights, and at such salaries as if they had originally entered at £100—£10—£200—£15—£350; whether he can explain who was responsible for initiating the granting of these privileges to the nominees of the Comptroller and Auditor-General, who originally entered without any claims to them; whether these facts were placed before the Treasury and the Colonial Office before such a scheme was sanctioned by these two Departments; whether the Treasury and Colonial Office officials are responsible for such sanction; whether the Second Division members of the old Exchequer and Audit Department, who entered by passing Civil Service examinations and obtaining Civil Service certificates, with pension rights, and on the same scale of salary, £70—£5—£100, etc., and who are now similarly serving in the newly-amalgamated departments as examiners, are allowed the same levelling-up of salaries as if they had originally entered at £100—£10—£200—£15—£350; whether these two old sets of officials will in future be interchangeable and employed on the same kind of work; whether he can say why the open competition men are treated differently from the men who entered through the patronage of the Comptroller and Auditor-General; and whether he will now furnish information on this subject, apart from such an official defence as may be put forward.

(*Answered by Mr. Runciman.*) Members of the old Colonial Audit Branch were appointed with a view to service in the Colonies in posts carrying an initial salary of £300 a year with pension rights. The scale of £70—£5—£100 was that laid down for the training period, generally a short one, of service at headquarters prior to appointments in the Colonies. Under the scheme of amalgamation recommended by the Comptroller and Auditor-General, and approved by the Colonial Office and the Treasury, members of the old Colonial Audit Branch serving at headquarters were granted Civil Service certificates under Clause VII. of the Order in Council of 4th June, 1870, and if in receipt of a lower rate of pay were raised to the minimum of the new scale (£100). Those filling posts in the Colonies will, if they elect the new terms, be similarly certificated and have their salaries re-assessed, as stated in the Question, the difference between the amounts thus arrived at and their present Colonial scales being treated as unpensionable local allowances. They will therefore have their pensions calculated on the Home scales of pay instead of, as heretofore, on the higher Colonial rates, and they will moreover, unlike Second Division clerks of the Exchequer and Audit Department, continue to be liable for service abroad. These circumstances therefore render their position dissimilar from that of the second division clerks of the Exchequer and Audit Department.

Dublin Education Department Accounts.

MR. FIELD: To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether, seeing that the Comptroller and Auditor-General stated on two different occasions last year that the only duplicate books kept at the Audit Office were those relating to the Chancery Suitors' Fund Account (England), and that subsequently he admitted that duplicate books relating to Irish public accounts were also kept at the Audit Office, he will say why the latter information was suppressed on the first two occasions.

(*Answered by Mr. Runciman.*) If the hon. Member will refer to the Answer which I gave him on 30th July last, and to which, I presume, he alludes in the last past of his Question, he will find that I did not admit that the records kept by the Audit Office of the Dublin Education Department accounts were duplicate records. These records are the only statements of the accounts in question to which the Comptroller and Auditor-General has access, and from his point of view are not duplicates, inasmuch as he has no opportunity of seeing the originals. The case of the Chancery Suitors' Fund Account is different, as the Comptroller and Auditor-General has access to the original records in that case. It was for this reason that the Exchequer and Audit Department did not think it necessary to refer to the records of the Dublin Education Department in the Answers furnished to earlier Questions, and not, of course, from any intention of withholding information.

Belfast Girl Labour Dispute.

MR. DEVLIN (Belfast, W.): To ask Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland whether his attention has been called to a case heard at the Belfast petty sessions on the 27th March, 1908, in which a number of female workers employed in a local hem-stitching factory sued the proprietor for a week's wages in lieu of notice and a discharge; whether it was proved that the girls had been employed on piece-work and that the size of the handkerchiefs had been increased without any increase in remuneration, and because these girls refused this extra work on the old conditions they were dismissed without notice; whether the bench decided the cases against the workers on the ground that, as the girls were engaged in piece-work, each piece of work was practically a contract in itself, and that it was open to the employer to vary the contract; and whether, in view of the hardship which such a decision means to thousands of workers in Belfast, he will take steps to have the law amended in regard to such contracts.

(*Answered by Mr. Cherry.*) The facts are substantially as stated in the Question, except that the summonses were not decided against the workers, as stated, but were, by consent, withdrawn. The Government are not prepared to introduce legislation to render employment by piece-work illegal, which would, so far as I can see, be the only method of providing the remedy which the hon. Member appears to desire.

Bengal and Assam Judicial Services.

SIR H. COTTON (Nottingham, E.): To ask the Secretary of State for India when the separation of the subordinate judicial services of Bengal and Eastern Bengal and Assam will be carried out; and whether, in view of the existing inequality between the proportion of subordinate Judges and munsiffs in Bengal and Eastern Bengal, arrangements will be made to equalise the prospects of promotion in both provinces, so that no undue hardship may be caused to the subordinate Judiciary of East Bengal.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Morley.*) I am not able at present to say when the proposals now under the consideration of the Government of India will take effect, or to give any details of the scheme; but the subjects mentioned in the Question will no doubt receive attention.

Annalee Labourers' Cottage.

MR. VINCENT KENNEDY (Cavan, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will say whether the Local Government Board rejected the claim of William Walker for a labourer's cottage on the lands of James Shiels, J.P., Annalee, in No. 1 Cootehill Rural District Council; was the applicant living with Mr. Shiels when he lodged the representation; and will he state why this labourer was refused a cottage.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The application in question was rejected by the inspector because the applicant did not work in the rural district. The evidence showed that the applicant was living in the rural district, in a house belonging to Mr. Shiels, when the application on his behalf was lodged, but for two or three months previous to the inquiry he was living in the Cootehill urban district, and had actually been working therein for about seventeen months.

Grants to Irish Hospitals.

MR. RIDSDALE (Brighton): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he is aware that an annual grant of £15,850 to various Irish hospitals is divided according to an arrangement made over fifty years ago: whether the result of this ancient scheme is that one hospital (the Rotunda Lying-in Hospital) obtains an income above its expenditure; and whether, if the facts are as stated, he will consider the advisability of re-adjusting the grants.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The fact is as stated in the first part of the Question. The Rotunda Hospital receives an annual grant of £700 from the Parliamentary grant of £15,850. I am informed that it is a mistake to suppose that the normal annual income of the hospital exceeds its expenditure. A large debt was incurred in recent years by the building, at a cost of over £8,000, of increased accommodation to provide for the great increase (nearly 40 per cent. in the last twelve years) of intern patients. For the reduction of this debt special donations have been given and securities have been sold, and the annnal income of the hospital has thus been apparently increased. The last account of the hospital, namely, that for the year 1906–7, shows, however, that there was a balance due to the bank of £1,112, the deficit of estimated income in that year being £960. The Parliamentary Estimate for the year 1908–9 shows an estimated excess of expenditure over income, exclusive of the grant, of £672, and this is barely covered by the amount of the grant of £700. The estimated income, moreover, includes voluntary contributions and other items of a precarious character, amounting to over £3,000, which may not be fully realised. My hon. friend may not be aware that the Hospitals Commission, which, in 1887, reviewed the grants to all the Dublin hospitals participating in the Vote, described the Rotunda Hospital as pre-eminently a national institution worthy of support. Upon the facts as they have been reported to me, there do not appear to be any grounds for readjusting the Parliamentary grant to the detriment of this hospital.

Eviction on Lord Oranmore's Estate.

MR. JOHN O'DONNELL (Mayo, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether an attempt was recently made by the employees of Lord Oranmore to evict a man named William Carey, Ballindine, and part of the furniture was removed by these persons; whether on being asked by some neighbours for their legal authority to evict Carey they refused to show any, and were cautioned as to the illegality of the proceedings, and then withdrew from the place; and, if so, whether he will have instructions issued with a view to prosecuting the parties who attacked the house of this man.

MR. JOHN O'DONNELL: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether a police sergeant and two constables attended an attempted eviction of a tenant named Carey, on the estate of Lord Oranmore, in Ballindine, county Mayo; if so, by whose instructions were they sent there; did they take any steps to ascertain whether the persons who were engaged in the work had the necessary legal authority for doing so; and, if not, why did they show such negligence in the discharge of their duty in connection with a matter that meant so much to the victims.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) On 24th February Lord Oranmore's steward and other employees proceeded to evict a Mrs. Hughes and her lodger, William Carey, at Ballindine. They removed Mrs. Hughes' property from the house, but Carey and his son prevented the removal of their own property. The steward called on the police to assist him in removing the Careys, but as no warrant or decree was produced the police declined to assist. The steward thereupon abandoned the proceedings, and replaced Mrs. Hughes' effects in the house. The police attended, by direction of the district inspector, for the purpose of preserving the peace. This was the only duty which they had to perform in connection with the proceedings, and they properly confined themselves to it. If the action of the steward was illegal, the ordinary legal remedies are open to the aggrieved persons. The case is not one for proceedings by the police.

Royal Commission on Irish Congestion.

MR. JOHN O'DONNELL: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Royal Commission on Congestion in Ireland have yet completed their Report; if not, why not, and when will it be laid upon the Table of the House of Commons; whether it is the intention of the Government to pass any legislation this session, dealing with the operations of the Land Act of 1903 and other Acts of a similar nature in the West of Ireland and other congested areas; and, if so, what is the probable date on which a Bill based on the findings of the Royal Commission will be introduced.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The Royal Commission on Congestion in Ireland are busily engaged upon their Report, and hope to sign it shortly after Easter. It would be premature to make any announcement as to intended legislation until the Report has been received and considered.

Ballindine Evicted Tenant.

MR. JOHN O'DONNELL: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether a widow named Mary Walsh was recently evicted from her holding near Ballindine, county Mayo, by Lord Oranmore, and no notice of his intention to evict was served on the Claremorris Guardians, and whether, as a consequence, there was no relieving officer present on the occasion; and, if so, whether steps will be taken to prosecute Lord Oranmore for his violation of the law in this respect.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell*). In such case as is supposed in the Question it rests with the Board of Guardians, and not with the Government, to institute proceedings for the recovery of the penalty from the person in default. According to my information, however, there were no eviction proceedings in the case in question, nor did any eviction take place; but Mrs. Walsh voluntarily gave up possession of a small dilapidated cabin which she occupied, in consequence, as Mrs. Walsh alleges, of a promise made by Lord Oranmore's representative that the place would be made habitable for her.

Royal Irish Constabulary—Phœnix Park Depot Command.

MR. JOHN O'DONNELL: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether there is any regulation which disqualifies a Roman Catholic officer from fulfilling the position of commandant at the Royal Irish Constabulary Depot, Phœnix Park, Dublin; if not, why have two senior Roman Catholic county inspectors been passed over, and County Inspector Ball, of Cork, appointed to the position; whether this County Inspector Ball is the same officer who ordered the police to fire on the people at Ballina, county Mayo, some years ago; and, if so, whether this is the qualification which entitles him to promotion over the heads of his seniors who have no such record; whether there has ever been a Roman Catholic commandant at the Royal Irish Constabulary Depot; what are the proportions of religious denominations there at present amongst the officers and rank and file; whether the Inspector-General and the Town Inspector, Belfast, are Protestants; and whether even one position of trust might be given to a Catholic.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) There is no regulation which prohibits the appointment of a Roman Catholic officer to the post of commandant. County Inspector Ball has been appointed to the post as being the officer best fitted for it. He is the same officer who when district inspector, twenty-six years ago, ordered the police to fire on a riotous mob at Ballina. This circumstance had no bearing whatever on his selection as commandant. The post in question has not been held by a Catholic since its creation in 1859. On 1st January last there were eleven Protestant and three Roman Catholic officers at the depot and sub-depot; and the rank and file there, including recruits in training, comprised 820 Catholics and 224 of other denominations. The Inspector-General and the Commissioner of Belfast are Protestants, but it may be mentioned that the Deputy Inspector-General, who is second in command of the force, is a Catholic. In selecting officers for the staff of the Royal Irish Constabulary professional qualifications only are taken into account, and not religion.

Loughglynn Public Works.

MR. JOHN O'DONNELL: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether a ganger named Stephen Flanagan, in the employment of the Congested Districts Board at Loughglynn, has been reported for the employing of men, who were supposed to be working for the Board, in connection with his own private work; and, if so, what steps have been taken to have him removed to some other district.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) I am informed that Stephen Flanagan, who is manager of the Congested Districts Board's saw-mill at Loughglynn, has not been reported for any such offence as is mentioned in the Question. He is regarded as a most trustworthy man, and has always given satisfaction to the Board.

Lord Oranmore's Tenantry.

MR. JOHN O'DONNELL: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the tenants of Lord Oranmore, at Ballindine, county Mayo, have asked the landlord to sell their holdings to them under the Land Act of 1903; whether they have placed the matter in the hands of the Congested Districts Board; that congestion of an acute nature exists in portions of this estate; is he aware that there is a considerable quantity of grazing land on it which, if divided, would enable each tenant to occupy an economic holding; whether the Congested Districts Board has entered into negotiations with the landlord; if so, what is the number of years' purchase demanded by him and offered by the Board, if any; and whether, if he persists in his refusal to sell, steps will be taken to deal with this estate on similar lines to those taken on the estate of Lord Clanricarde in county Galway.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The estate in question was offered for sale to the Congested Districts Board in January last. Particulars of the estate, however, were not obtained nor was any price mentioned on either side, because the Board were obliged to inform the owner that owing to the insufficiency of their funds for improvement works they were unable to proceed at present with the purchase of any further tenanted estates.

De Montalt Estate, Evicted Tenants.

MR. KENDAL O'BRIEN (Tipperary Mid.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the rural district council of Cashel has forwarded a resolution to the Estates Commissioners, asking them to allot a portion of the untenanted land of the de Montalt estate, county Tipperary, to the labourers of the locality; and whether, in view of the provisions of Section 4 of the Land Act of 1903, as to sanctioning the rural council as trustees to obtain an advance under that Act to enable them to acquire land, and in view of the desire of the council to satisfy the needs of the labourers, the Estates Commissioners will sell to the council a portion of this untenanted land for the purposes of the section referred to.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The Estates Commissioners received the resolution in question, and replied that, if the council should obtain the consent of the Local Government Board and prepare a scheme, the Commissioners would be prepared to consider the advisability of selling the land to them for the purpose of the Labourers Act.

Westmeath Evicted Tenants.

MR. DELANY (Queen's County, Ossory): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state what steps have been taken to reinstate or otherwise provide for Mrs. Mary Wilson, who was evicted from two farms in the county of Westmeath, near Tyrrellspass, one on Colonel Smyth's estate, at Gaybrook, and the second on that of Mr. Boyd Rochford's; and can he say if the Estates Commissioners propose to acquire the non-residential grazing farm of Newtown, estate of Major Murphy, situated in the vicinity, seeing that there are other evicted tenants in the locality as well as Mrs. Wilson unprovided for.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The Estates Commissioners have referred the case of Mrs. Wilson to an inspector with the object of providing her with a holding if possible. The Commissioners have no knowledge of the untenanted land referred to in the second part of the Question, but if furnished with the name and address of the owner and particulars of the land they will consider the question of acquiring it.

Boyle Labourers' Cottage Scheme.

MR. JAMES O'KELLY (Roscommon, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether an inquiry was held in December last year, under the

Labourers Act, into a scheme submitted by the Boyle No. 1 District Council for the erection of labourers' cottages; whether the land on which it is proposed to build the cottages is being held over pending the decision of the Local Government Board; whether the Report of the latter upon the scheme has yet been submitted; and, if not, whether he can state the cause of the delay.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The scheme in this case embraced 448 plots of land and 408 cottages. Apart from the fact that the scheme was a very large one, some delay was caused by the fact that alternative sites were offered in a number of cases, and it was necessary that the written consents of the persons interested should be obtained. The inspector's order has now been signed, and copies will be sent to the council as soon as they are received from the printer.

Hillstreet Disturbances.

Mr. JAMES O'KELLY: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that sixteen young men belonging to the district were brought up at Roscommon in July of last year charged with riotous conduct at Hillstreet on the 28th May previous; that on the affidavit of the Crown Solicitor the venue was changed to Dublin; and that the traversers were tried in November last with the result that the jury disagreed; whether several of the traversers are now restrained from leaving the country through being under bail to come up for trial when called upon; and whether the Government propose to take any action in the matter to relieve the bailees of their responsibilities and to restore the traversers to freedom of action.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The Crown does not intend to take any further action in this case. The traversers are free to leave the country if they so desire. No action will be taken against the bailees in the event of their doing so.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Armour-Piercing Projectiles.

Mr. PIKE PEASE (Darlington): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether the increase of penetrative power, due to the invention of soft-metal caps for armour-piercing projectiles, renders it practicable to effect a corresponding reduction in the calibre and weight of all guns, mountings, and ammunition designed for the attack of the heaviest armour.

The CIVIL LORD of the ADMIRALTY (Mr. Lambert, Devon, South Molton): The Answer is in the negative.

Mr. PIKE PEASE: Has not this invention of Colonel English been of great value to the Admiralty?

Mr. LAMBERT: I think I ought to have notice of that, as it is an expert's question.

Naval Battle Practice.

Viscount CASTLEREAGH (Maidstone): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty if any naval courts of inquiry sat to inquire into the results of the gunnery of any ships of the Home Fleet before or after the recent battle practice; if so, will he state the reasons for holding such courts of inquiry; and whether the "Hannibal" was one of the ships in question.

Mr. LAMBERT: Whenever the results of a firing are such as to throw doubts on the capacity of the gun layers or the supervision of the officers, a court of inquiry is held. Such courts have been held either before or after last year's battle practice in all the fleets except China and Mediterranean. The "Hannibal" was one of the ships affected.

Viscount CASTLEREAGH was understood to ask for a more definite statement in regard to the "Hannibal."

Mr. LAMBERT replied that what was done in that case was quite usual.

Viscount CASTLEREAGH: Was the inquiry held before or after the battle practice?

Mr. LAMBERT asked for notice.

Armour-Piercing Projectiles.

Mr. PIKE PEASE: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether any person is officially recognised as the inventor of soft-metal caps for use with armour-piercing projectiles.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. HALDANE, Haddington): Lieutenant-Colonel T. English (late R.E.) was the officer who, in conjunction with the late General Inglis, in 1878, first suggested to the War Department the use of a cap for increasing the penetration of armour-piercing projectiles; trials were made, but it was not considered that any advantage was gained by using the cap, as the low velocity of the guns of that date did not give any advantage to the use of the capped projectile. Recent improvements in guns and armour have, however, changed the conditions, and the cap has been found to possess certain advantages which have led to its adoption. It must be pointed out that Colonel English's suggestion arose out of an official experiment, and was a deduction therefrom of such a nature as might reasonably be expected from an officer selected for the important duties with which he was at the time charged. But although it was not at this time, nor for many years after, of any use, every credit is due to him for making it.

Attestation Forms.

SIR WILLIAM BULL (Hammersmith): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether the description register into which each soldier's attestation is written, and in which his name, his age, his height, the colour of his hair, where he was born, his trade, where he was enlisted, and other particulars are preserved, can in future be ultimately kept at the Record Office rather than with the regiments, which are always moving about.

MR. HALDANE: These description registers are an obsolete form of register, and if not required for the purposes of the record office of the grouped regimental district should be returned to the War Office for transmission to the Public Record Office, where a large number of similar registers are preserved. Under no circumstances should they be retained with the regiments. I am obliged to the hon. Member for drawing my attention to the matter.

The Scottish Horse.

MR. BOWERMAN (Deptford): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if he has been furnished with a report from the General Officer Commanding-in-Chief concerning the statement that recruiting for the Scottish Horse is left in the hands of the troopers, who can object to and prevent the recruiting of any individual on account of social inequality; and whether such report corroborates the complaint recently made that a young fellow who desired to join the regiment was rejected on the ground that he was badly dressed, and was not in the habit of wearing a collar and tie.

MR. HALDANE: I have made inquiries into this matter. The result is to show that in the opinion not only of the recruiting officer, but of the men in the regiment, the candidate in question was not suitable to be recruited, and he was consequently rejected in accordance with paragraph 196 of the Recruiting Regulations.

MR. MITCHELL-THOMSON (Lanarkshire, N.W.): Has the right hon. Gentleman any information to the effect that this recruit had been twice previously convicted before a magistrate? Who was the officer responsible for his rejection?

MR. HALDANE: I have no information.

Territorial Army Regulations.

COLONEL LOCKWOOD (Essex, Epping): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War when the new pocket book dealing with questions affecting the *status* and responsibility of the Territorial Army will be published; and if copies can be placed in the Vote Office for the convenience of Members.

MR. HALDANE: The expression "pocket book" was not used by me in connection with the Territorial Force in the speech to which the Question refers. What is proposed is (1) to publish the regulations for the Territorial Force as soon as they are complete; (2) to publish a small hand-book dealing with the Territorial Force from a legal and constitutional point of view, and giving full information as to the responsibilities and liabilities of members of the Force, and (3) to issue in pamphlet form the substance of the regulations in popular language.

COLONEL LOCKWOOD: Can the right hon. Gentleman say when this encyclopædia is likely to be ready?

MR. HALDANE: Like all encyclopædias it is a pity to hurry its preparation.

Yeomen and the Territorial Army.

VISCOUNT HELMSLEY (Yorkshire, N.R., Thirsk): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether Yeoman enrolled before 18th August 1901, and not under the Act of that year, will be allowed to engage in the Territorial Army for one year at a time, or whether, after 31st March 1909, they will be required to sign for four years if they wish to remain members of the Territorial Force.

I beg also to ask the Secretary of State for War whether yeoman serving under the Act of 1901, and having completed three years service or their period of re-engagement, as the case may be, will be permitted to engage in the Territorial Army for one year, and so on from year to year, or whether they will be compelled, if they wish to join the Territorial Army, to bind themselves to serve for four years.

MR. HALDANE: In reply to these questions will the noble Lord kindly refer to my very full reply to similar Questions put by my hon. and gallant friend the Member for Southampton on 1st April.

Ranges for the Territorial Artillery.

MR. ASHLEY (Lancashire, Blackpool): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War what steps are being taken to provide ranges for the Territorial Artillery.

MR. HALDANE: The General Officers Commanding-in-Chief have been instructed to place themselves in communication with the County Associations in reference to possible artillery ranges.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER (Croydon): Have any funds been set aside for the provision of these new ranges?

MR. HALDANE: No money has been taken in the Estimates.

MR. ASHLEY: Then what will the new force do for ranges?

MR. HALDANE: We shall do the best we can for them with the existing ones.

MR. ASHLEY: But are they not all fully occupied?

[No Answer was returned.]

Regular Army Establishment.

MR. ASHLEY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War how many men are required at the present time to bring the Regular Army up to establishment; and whether, when the strength as been brought up to establishment, it is his intention to raise the establishment of infantry battalions at home and on the British establishment abroad from 720 to 800 rank and file.

MR. HALDANE: The figures for the 1st March only are at present available and are as follows—

	Establishment.	Strength.	Surplus.	Deficit.
Home and Colonies - -	157,958	153,755	—	4,203
India - - - - -	72,692	72,751	59	—
	230,650	226,506	—	—

Net deficit - 4,144

It will be time to consider raising the home establishment when the strength of units at home has reached the present establishment. The Army Council, as the hon. Member is doubtless aware, has readjusted the terms of service, and it is estimated that the enlistments, which are being made on the new terms, will before long get rid of the existing shortage.

Volunteer Officers and the Long Service Medal.

MR. FIENNES (Oxfordshire, Banbury): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he will consider the advisability of granting a long-service medal to those officers who have not served for not less than ten years in the Auxiliary Forces and who do not transfer to the Territorial Army.

MR. HALDANE: The question of granting the Volunteer Officers' Decoration to officers who do not transfer to the Territorial Force and who have not completed the necessary twenty years service is under consideration, and I hope to be able shortly to announce that we can make some concession on this point. As regards Militia and Yeomanry Officers the question does not apply.

Pimlico Army Boot Stores.

MR. T. F. RICHARDS (Wolverhampton, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he can state the amount of boots and shoes in stock at the Pimlico Department which have not been made during the past four years; whether most of these are sizes 10-4 fitting and 10-3 fitting; whether any, and, if so, how many, were made for use during the South African War; and whether, if he has no further use for them, he will consider the advisability of disposing of them.

MR. HALDANE: There are 42,000 pairs of ankle boots and 28,000 pairs of Highlanders' shoes in stock which have not been made during the last four years. Of these 15,000 pairs of boots and 1,100 pairs of shoes are of sizes 10-3 and 10-4. These were ordered during the South African War. Certain quantities of the larger sizes which will not be required within a reasonable period have been and are being disposed of by sale as opportunity offers.

Army Boots.

MR. T. F. RICHARDS: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that certain Army contractors are permitted to send in to the Pimlico depot Army boots that have been closed by machinery, whereas the specification calls for counters back seam and side seam to be stabbed; whether he is aware that to close the side seams with the machine renders the boot less durable, and gives the favoured manufacturer an advantage over his smaller competitor; and whether he will insist upon the specifications being adhered to.

MR. HALDANE: The specifications permit contractors to have the alternative of supplying hand closed or machine closed boots. The experiment of asking for hand closed boots only was tried for a few months last year, but the Department has now reverted to the alternative of hand or machine closing, which is found to work quite satisfactorily.

MR. T. F. RICHARDS suggested that the specification should be altered.

Army Manœuvres in the New Forest.

MR. ASHLEY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War with reference to the proposed Army manœuvres in the New Forest, in what form the commoners and the Court of Verderers of the New Forest have signified their friendly agreement to the proposals of the Army Council.

I beg also to ask the Secretary of State for War, with reference to the proposed Army manœuvres in the New Forest, by what means commoners of the Forest can obtain compensation for injury done by manœuvres conducted otherwise than under The Military Manœuvres Act, 1897.

MR. HALDANE: In reply to these questions I will give the House an account of what has taken place. The Commissioner in charge of the New Forest attended the last Verderers' Court on 16th March and laid before them the applications he had received from the General Officer Commanding the Southern Division for holding manœuvres. At the desire of the Verderers one of these applications was declined, and the Commissioner then arranged to come down again with a representative of the War Department to discuss the arrangements for safeguarding the interests of the commoners and for payment of compensation for any damage which might be caused. Subsequently, the Official Verderer wrote to the Commissioner declining to meet him and the representative of the War Office on the ground that the proposed manœuvres were unlawful unless held under the Military Manœuvres Act, 1897. The Commissioner is advised that this is a mistake and has renewed his proposal that he and a representative of the War Department should confer with the Verderers as soon as possible. Arrangements for manœuvres on a smaller scale have been made in this way year by year for many years past and have worked smoothly and satisfactorily. I am proposing to ask the Verderers to meet me shortly in order to discuss with them how best to settle questions of compensation and similar matters that may arise out of the manœuvres."

Mr. ASHLEY: What legal means are there for a commoner to get compensation against the Government, supposing the right hon. Gentleman does not hold these manœuvres under the Act of 1897?

Mr. HALDANE: We have done it over and over again. We have made arrangements for that purpose. I am prepared to appoint a private committee on which both sides shall be represented to arrange these matters of compensation. I am in favour of settling these things amicably in connection with manœuvres, and no difficulties arise if good temper and tact are shown on both sides.

Mr. ASHLEY: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the Act of 1897 was expressly passed in order to get rid of this trouble, and to give an expeditious and cheap way of assessing damages?

Mr. SPEAKER: That does not arise out of the Answer. It is a matter of argument.

Cordite.

Lord BALCARRES (Lancashire, Chorley): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether exhaustive tests of cordite have lately been made; and, if so, what make of cordite has given the best results.

Mr. HALDANE: Exhaustive tests have been made, and will continue to be made, as to the conditions of cordite in the service. All cordite is made to the same specification, and has to pass the same tests.

Lord BALCARRES: Have the results of the tests been communicated to the firms concerned?

Mr. HALDANE: I must have notice of that Question.

Fife Territorial Field Artillery.

Major ANSTRUTHER-GRAY (St. Andrews Burghs): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War when the converted 15-pounder gun will be supplied to the Fife Territorial Field Artillery Battery.

Mr. HALDANE: One gun was issued early in March to the 1st Highland Brigade of which one battery is supplied by the 1st Fife Artillery. This gun was sent to Forfar. Up to the present it has only been possible to issue one gun per brigade, but further issues will be made as quickly as possible, and I hope that the Fife battery may receive a gun at an early date.

Major ANSTRUTHER-GRAY: Will it be before the training?

Mr. HALDANE: If not I have no doubt other arrangements will be made. We are pushing the matter on.

Major ANSTRUTHER-GRAY: But will they have the two guns before the training?

Mr. HALDANE: I hope so, but I do not want to give any undertaking.

Residence for War Office Officials.

Mr. LONSDALE (Armagh, Mid.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether it is in contemplation to provide official residences in the vicinity of the War Office for the Secretary of State for War and the Chief of the General Staff.

Mr. HALDANE: I am not aware that any such buildings are contemplated. The suggestion is one which I personally greatly admire, but I rather think that there are yet more pressing demands on the purse of my right hon. friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Civil Servants and the Territorial Force Camps.

Sir WILLIAM BULL (Hammersmith): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for

War whether it is proposed to give special facilities to Civil servants who are members of the Territorial Force to attend camp; whether a Civil servant who attends the annual training in camp, will, in addition to the number of days leave to which he is entitled as a Civil servant, be granted extra leave according to the number of days spent in camp, and, in the event of the Territorial Force being called up for six months consecutive training, what will be the position of Civil servants in relation to their civil duties; and, if there are any exceptions to be made, can he say in what Departments.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. RUNCIMAN, Dewsbury): The Answer to the first part of the Question is in the affirmative. Special leave up to a maximum of fifteen days will be granted for the purpose of attending camp subject to the discretion of the head of the Department to which the Civil servant belongs, and to the requirements of the service. I do not think it necessary or desirable to lay down any rule with regard to the arrangements to be made in the event of the Territorial Force being called up for six months' consecutive training until that contingency arises, nor can I make any general statement as to any exceptions that may have to be made. I may add that the Treasury hopes in this matter to set a good example to other employers.

Dinizulu's Position in Zululand.

MR. MACKARNESS (Berkshire, Newbury): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether Dinizulu is a British subject who was, in 1898, established as a Government induna in Zululand, under a guarantee from the Imperial Government that the position then assigned to him should not be withdrawn without the approval of the Secretary of State; whether this chief was, early in December last, arrested without any definite charge being made against him, and has since that date been imprisoned and examined in secret without being charged with any specific offence; and whether the Secretary of State has been made aware of any conduct on Dinizulu's part disentitling him to the fulfilment of the guarantee given by the Imperial Government, and, if not, what steps he proposes to take.

THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. CHURCHILL, Manchester, N.W.): The reply to the first paragraph of the Question is in the affirmative; as to the second, Dinizulu has been charged with treason and other offences, and the Natal Government is proceeding against him in a manner which they are advised is in accordance with the law of the Colony. On the remainder of the hon. and learned Member's Question I can only say that the Secretary of State's opinion has already been expressed, and I am not in a position to add anything to any answers to similar Questions.

SIR GILBERT PARKER (Gravesend): Can the right hon. Gentleman say what is the opinion of the Secretary for the Colonies?

MR. CHURCHILL: It will be found in the Papers to be laid.

Native Administration in Zululand.

MR. MACKARNESS: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the Native Affairs Commission in Natal, which reported in July last, came to the conclusion that the existing system of native administration in Zululand indicated, on the part of the Natal Government, lack of knowledge, poverty of resource, and erroneous methods, and that the law applied to the natives exhibited a total disregard of native feelings and morals; whether anything has been done to remedy this state of things, except to impose martial law upon the natives; and whether the Secretary of State is aware of any other steps being taken to give effect to the recommendations made by the Commission.

MR. CHURCHILL: The statements cited by my hon. friend in the first part of his Question are certainly sustained by some passages of the Report of the Natal Native Affairs Commission. The Natal Ministers have informed us that they have given effect to certain administrative measures designed to carry out in part the recommendations of the Report, and that they contemplate legislation of similar character. We are not, however, yet apprised of the specific measures adopted or contemplated, and the Natal Parliament does not meet until the 8th May.

Natal Administration.

MR. MACKARNESS: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the total electorate in the Colony of Natal amounts to only 23,688 voters; whether the total number of votes given for all the four members of the present Natal Government was under 2,000; whether this Government has proclaimed and for many months maintained, martial law in the Colony against the wishes of the Governor and the Imperial Government; whether a petition and declaration of rights has been signed by over 8,000 adult colonists, declaring that responsible government has been practically superseded by an oligarchy, that the incidence of taxation is grievously unjust, and that an absolute confusion has arisen in the relations between the white and black population; whether an amendment of the constitution has been asked for; and, if so, what steps the Secretary of State proposes to take.

MR. CHURCHILL: A movement for a redistribution of seats in Natal has been proceeding for some time past, and I am aware of the statements with regard to the electoral conditions in this Colony referred to in the Question which have been made in the course of it. The matter is a domestic one which must be left to the people of the Colony. I cannot add anything to the statements which I have already made as to martial law.

Martial Law in Natal.

MR. MACKARNESS: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether it was recently decided by the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council that the only justification for proclaiming martial law in a Colony was the existence there of a condition either of actual war or of rebellion: whether that decision is binding in the Colony of Natal; what evidence is in the possession of the Secretary of State to show that such a condition of things exists in that Colony; and, if there is no such evidence, what steps he proposes to take to restore to British subjects living under the Government of that Colony the civil rights of which they have been deprived by the imposition of martial law.

MR. CHURCHILL: My hon. and learned friend refers no doubt to the judgment on the petition of Tilonko for special leave to appeal from a judgment of a court martial at Pietermaritzburg. It is there pointed out that martial law does not exist by virtue of a proclamation, but that if there is war there is a right to repel force by force. The Ministers who are responsible for the government of Natal, and who must justify their action before the Natal Parliament, hold that martial law cannot be *pro forma* withdrawn until an Act of Indemnity has been obtained, but I am informed that it is, and has been for some time, practically in abeyance.

MR. MACKARNESS: When will the Act of Indemnity be likely to pass?

MR. CHURCHILL: The Natal Parliament does not meet until May, and it cannot therefore be passed until after that date. Then the Act will have to come over here for the sanction of the Secretary of State.

AN HON. MEMBER: Will facilities be given for discussing this matter in the House before the assent of the Government is given to the Act of Indemnity?

MR. CHURCHILL: My hon. friend must address that Question to the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): Will the right hon. Gentleman remind his colleagues that the Governor of Natal has protested against the continuance of martial law?

[No Answer was returned.]

White Unskilled Labour in the Transvaal Mines.

MR. FIENNES (Oxfordshire, Banbury): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the experiment in white unskilled labour on one of the Robinson mines has been commenced; and, if so, what measure of success has been obtained.

MR. CHURCHILL: The experiment as far as I know has not been begun.

MR. FIENNES: Did not the right hon. Gentleman make this statement to the House on 31st July——

MR. SPEAKER: It is contrary to order to make a quotation at Question time.

MR. WEDGWOOD (Newcastle-under-Lyme): Has the right hon. Gentleman taken steps to obtain for the House a Report of the Committee which recently sat in the Transvaal on white employment in the mines?

MR. CHURCHILL: The Report is on its way to this country, and while one cannot say anything about a document in advance, I certainly think it very desirable that it should be brought to the notice of this House. I will ask the Secretary of State whether it can be published.

Colonial Office Records.

LORD BALCARRES: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies what is the nature of the documents removed from the Colonial Office for the destruction of which authority is now being sought by an additional rule under 40 and 41 Vic., c. 55, and 61 and 62 Vic., c. 12.

MR. CHURCHILL. The documents referred to are those which are not of sufficient public value to justify their preservation in the Public Record Office. The object of the additional rule is to enable such documents to be transferred to Colonial Governments, if so desired in any case, instead of being destroyed under the provisions of the existing rules.

Labour in the Transvaal Mines.

MR. FELL (Great Yarmouth): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies if, approximately, 1,000 white men are employed in the Transvaal mines for every 10,000 Chinese employed there, and 1,000 white men for every 15,000 Kaffirs employed.

MR. CHURCHILL: The last official returns — those from January — give 16,700 whites, 123,000 natives, and 33,800 Chinese. The proportions suggested in the Question, which would give 11·580 whites, do not therefore appear to be correct. I may add, however, that I was drawn unwittingly into an error, in reply to a Supplementary Question by the hon. Member for Gravesend on 31st March, when I stated that Lord Milner had predicted that 1,000 white men would be employed for every 10,000 Chinese. What Lord Milner really said was that he was prepared to stake his reputation on the prediction that for every 10,000 coloured labourers, 10,000 whites including women and children would be added to the population within three years. This was 1904, and although between the dates of the arrival and the first departures of the Chinese there was an increase of 87,800 coloured labourers, the population of Johannesburg according to the latest returns has remained stationary.

Dinizulu's Trial.

*MR. HERBERT (Buckinghamshire, Wycombe): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the meaning attached by His Majesty's Government to its acknowledged obligation to guarantee Dinizulu a fair trial is that such trial shall be in accordance with the elementary principles of justice; whether evidence collected in Zululand by the Natal Government, which is the prosecutor, is being adduced against Dinizulu, while at the same time the Natal Government precludes the advisers of Dinizulu from all possibility of testing this evidence by cross-examination by prohibiting them from collecting any evidence in Zululand; and whether His Majesty's Government, in dealing with this matter, has appreciated the fact that evidence which is false or inaccurate may be relevant and admissible.

MR. CHURCHILL: Dinizulu is not yet committed for trial, but the Natal Government have promised to give the defence the usual opportunities of obtaining evidence before the trial comes on. The English law of evidence has been applied to Natal by statute, and it will be for the Supreme Court of the Colony which will try the case to weigh the value of the evidence produced.

*MR. HERBERT: Would it not be open to the prosecution at the trial to refer witnesses to the depositions they have made at the preliminary examination, to caution them to be careful, and in effect to threaten them with prosecution for perjury if they do not swear up to the evidence in their depositions which it has been impossible to test by cross-examination?

Mr. CHURCHILL: I could not say without notice what actually will be the procedure in the Supreme Court in Natal, but I think it fair to assume that it will be fully in accordance with the principles and traditions of justice, and if injustices or improprieties have been committed at the earlier stages of the proceedings, these injustices or improprieties will be to the advantage of the prisoner.

Mr. FLYNN (Cork, N.): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether, at the proceedings before the Supreme Court of Natal on the 2nd instant, Mr. Renaud, counsel for Dinizulu, applied for an interdict restraining the magistrate from continuing the preliminary examination and alleged grave irregularities, such as terrorising the witnesses and other scandalous conduct; and whether the Colonial Office authorities keep themselves fully informed as to the course of proceedings in the trial of this native chieftain.

Mr. CHURCHILL: The Secretary of State has as yet received no official information as to the proceedings mentioned. The Press telegram states that the Supreme Court has reserved judgment. The Governor is keeping the Secretary of State fully informed as to the course of the proceedings from time to time.

Mr. FLYNN: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that there is an intense feeling in this House and in the country generally that Dinizulu should get a fair trial?

Mr. CHURCHILL: I am not only aware of it, but I share it very strongly myself.

Jamaica Bananas.

Mr. HAROLD COX (Preston): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention has been called to the recent discussion upon the subsidy now paid for the introduction of Jamaica bananas at the annual meeting of the National Federation of Fruit and Potato Trades Associations, and to the statement made in the course of that discussion that, when there was a big crop of English strawberries or other home-grown fruit, the supply of bananas did a great deal to spoil the market for them, and to the further statements that the banana trade was the only branch of the fruit trade that was artificially propped up, and that other branches were able to hold their own without artificial aid; and whether he will at the earliest moment give notice that it is the intention of the Government not to renew this artificial aid to a Colonial industry at the expense of the British taxpayer, and to the injury of competing home industries.

Mr. CHURCHILL: The attention of the Secretary of State has not been called to the discussion to which the hon. Member refers; but I may observe that the subsidy paid under the contract of the 15th of April, 1900, is not paid solely on account of the carriage of bananas, but also secures a direct service of mail and passenger steamers and that only one half is paid by the United Kingdom, the remaining half being paid by Jamaica. The contract has been laid before Parliament as Cd. Paper 175 of 1900.

Earl WINTERTON (Sussex, Horsham) asked if it was not the case that the importation of these bananas furnished cheap and nutritious food for the people.

Mr. ALDEN (Middlesex, Tottenham) asked if it was not a fact that nearly all the Jamaica bananas came from South America.

[No Answer was returned.]

Persian Customs Service.

Mr. WEDGWOOD: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he has any official information to the effect that the Persian Government either contemplate, or actually are, replacing the Belgians now in the Persian Customs service by Germans.

Mr. RUNCIMAN: My right hon. friend has nothing to add to the Answer which he returned to the Question asked by the hon. Member on this subject on the 1st instant.

Mr. WEDGWOOD: Is the hon. Gentleman aware that the Answer on 1st March was to the effect that the German

Government did not wish to have Germans in the Persian service?

Mr. RUNCIMAN: Yes sir, I answered the Question myself.

The Arrest of Mr. Luxenburg.

Mr. LAIDLAW (Renfrewshire, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he has obtained from the Russian Government any reason for their arresting Mr. Luxenburg.

Mr. RUNCIMAN: The charge on which Mr. Luxenburg was arrested was that of revolutionary propaganda. The Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs has promised His Majesty's Ambassador in St. Petersburg further details in regard to the case, and, in response to an inquiry made yesterday by Sir Arthur Nicholson, will endeavour to hasten the communication of further information.

Sir WILLIAM BULL: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he has been able to obtain from the Russian Government any evidence or statement justifying or purporting to justify Mr. Luxenburg's arrest.

Mr. RUNCIMAN: I beg to refer the hon. Member to the Answer I have just given to the hon. Member for Eastern Renfrew.

Mines (Eight Hours) Bill.

Sir WILLIAM BULL: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will enumerate the chambers of commerce, mercantile associations, and similar bodies which have memorialised the Department against the Mines (Eight Hours) Bill to date.

Lord R. CECIL: I beg also to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many deputations have waited upon him in opposition to the Mines (Eight Hours) Bill; what industries they represented; what was the amount of capital involved; and the number of men employed in the represented industries.

*The SECRETARY of STATE for the HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. Gladstone, Leeds, W.): I received a deputation from the Mining Association of Great Britain in January, and I have since received four other large deputations consisting of bodies most of which were in opposition to a bank to bank eight hours Bill. Besides the Mining Association of Great Britain, thirteen associations concerned in the manufacturing and transport industries of the country, and a large number of chambers of commerce were represented. The amount of capital and employment represented by these deputations was very great, but I cannot undertake to calculate it. I have also received numerous memorials and resolutions in writing, but there would be no advantage in the lengthy enumeration of these, as it may be taken for granted that all large consumers of coal are opposed to any measure which they think would bring about a material and permanent increase in price. It will be for Parliament to decide whether such an increase is probable or possible.

Punishment of the Lash.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL asked the Home Secretary whether his attention had been directed to the fact that Mr. Justice Lawrence sentenced at the Assizes at Cardiff, last week, no fewer than eleven persons to the punishment of the lash, in addition to terms of imprisonment; whether any of the floggings had been inflicted; and whether the sentences would be considered by the Home Office, with a view to the remission or reduction of the punishment, particularly in view of the Criminal Appeal Act which would come into operation in a few days, and also that these punishments were in the discretion of the Judge and were not fixed by law.

Mr. GLADSTONE: I have not had the opportunity of making myself acquainted with the circumstances, beyond the fact that the offences of which these men were convicted were offences of robbery with violence. The sentences were passed by a most careful and humane Judge, and I have no reason to think there is any ground for interference.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL: But if these floggings have not been inflicted, and in view of the Act shortly to come into force, does the right hon. Gentleman decline to review the sentences?

MR. GLADSTONE: I see no ground for interfering.

*MR. LUPTON (Lincolnshire, Sleaford): Is not the tendency of barbarous punishments to cause barbarity?

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order; that is a matter of opinion.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: Does the right hon. Gentleman decline to inquire into the infliction of these savage punishments?

MR. GLADSTONE. I have nothing to add to what I have said.

Castle Street Disaster.

LORD R. CECIL (Marylebone, E.): May I ask the Home Secretary if he can give the House any information about the terrible accident this morning in Castle Street?

MR. GLADSTONE: I regret I cannot give the noble Lord any details at present.

Lead Poisoning Rules.

MR. WEDGWOOD: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether any representatives have been nominated by the potters' operatives to serve on the Departmental Committee on the new lead poisoning rules.

MR. GLADSTONE: The matter is still under consideration.

Licensing Bill.

MR. SEARS (Cheltenham): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will say what number of licences would be likely to lapse annually under the Government Licensing Bill; how this compares with the number of licences annually transferred from one licence-holder to another, and new licences granted during the years 1900 to 1906; what number of licences were transferred or granted to new applicants; and whether preference could be given under the Bill in the case of transfers and new licences to those whose licences would lapse under that measure.

*MR. GLADSTONE: If the estimate of the probable reduction under the Bill, viz., some 30,000 or 32,000 licences is correct, and if the reduction is distributed evenly over a period of fourteen years, the annual reduction would be between 2,100 and 2,300. I have no information at present as to the number of transfers effected annually. The annual average of new licences granted in the years 1900 to 1907 was about 140, but only fifty-nine in the last three years. The chances of a licence-holder who has been displaced by the extinction of his licence obtaining another licence by transfer or new grant must depend entirely on the circumstances of the case and the discretion of the licensing authority. It is not possible to give by statute a preference to any such licence-holder.

Transfer of Licences.

MR. CHARLES ROBERTS (Lincoln): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he can state the number of transfers of licences for the sale of intoxicating liquor for the latest year for which figures are available in the cities of Manchester, Birmingham, and Bristol, respectively; and whether any estimate has been framed or can be framed of the total number of transfers annually in England and Wales.

MR. GLADSTONE: I have not the particulars for which my hon. friend asks either as regards the places named, or as regards the country at large; but I will consider whether any information can be obtained.

Wheat Price Returns.

MR. BOWLES (Lambeth, Norwood): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether the average price of wheat per quarter for each year, as returned on page 273 of the Statistical Abstract for the United Kingdom, is obtained by adding together the average price for each of the twelve months and dividing the total by twelve, without regard to the quantities of wheat sold at each price; if so, will he take steps to substitute for the average of averages thus obtained an average arrived at by dividing the total sum paid for the wheat of the year by the total number of quarters for which it was paid, or can he substitute in any other way a more accurate average of the year's price than that now given as affecting to be such; is the same system of arriving at a so-called average adopted in all the Board of

Trade and Customs Returns; and, if so, will he take steps to alter it and so to provide more accurate statistics.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE, Carnarvon Boroughs): The average price of wheat per quarter for each year published in the Statistical Abstract is not calculated by the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries in the way suggested, but by adding together the weekly averages of the weeks included in each year, and dividing the total by the number of weeks in each year. This method of calculation is laid down by the Corn Returns Act, 1882, under which Act the records of sales are obtained, and it cannot be varied without legislation. Generally speaking, the Answer to the last part of the Question is in the negative.

MR. BOWLES: Will the right hon. Gentleman consider the possibility of inserting in the abstract a note explaining the rules on which the averages are arrived at?

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: There is a Committee considering the whole matter, and I will refer that point to it.

Prices of Imported Articles.

MR. BOWLES: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether the average prices of imported articles, given on page 228 of the Statistical Abstract of the United Kingdom, are arrived at by reference to the prices at which the articles are actually sold, or by a calculation based on returns made by importers of their opinion of the value of the article at the time of its importation; if the latter, is he aware that there is often a difference between the opinion of the value entertained by the importer at the time of import and the actual price realised at the time of sale; will he in future refrain altogether from giving returns of opinions as returns of prices; and will he take steps to ascertain whether it is possible to substitute for them returns of the actual prices at which the articles in question change hands.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: The average values in question are calculated from the total quantities imported and the total values declared by importers. The values which importers are required to give on Customs entries are, in the case of goods invoiced at a quoted price, the prime cost with the freight and insurance added; in the case of goods consigned for sale, the latest sale value of such goods. I am not prepared to take any steps to alter these requirements.

Strike Prevention in Canada.

VISCOUNT HELMSLEY: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention has been called to an Act passed by the Federal Parliament of Canada in 1907, dealing with the prevention of strikes; whether he can state in how many cases the Act has been put into force, and with what results; and whether he will consider the advisability of introducing similar legislation for this country.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: My attention has been called to this Act. It relates primarily to mines and industries connected with public utilities, but disputes arising in other industries or trades may be brought under its provisions by agreement of the parties concerned. The Act came into force on 22nd March, 1907, and from that date up to 15th February, 1908, twenty-eight cases affecting mines and public utilities had been dealt with under its provisions in addition to one case referred by consent. In twenty-eight of the cases, strikes were either averted or ended, while in the remaining case the application of the Act failed to avert a strike. I have much sympathy with legislation with the object of strengthening the powers of the Board of Trade to deal with this class of disputes. The importance of the Canadian Act has not escaped my attention and its operation will be carefully watched.

Census of Production Act.

MR. SMEATON (Stirlingshire): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if he can inform the House what progress has been made in collecting the material required by the Census of Production Act; whether he has any hopes of being able to present comparative statistics of similar production in selected foreign countries; and when the first census is likely to be completed.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE: The only inquiry schedules at present issued are those relating to coal and ironstone mining. Other Schedules will be issued shortly, and it is hoped that practically the whole of the Returns to be made under the Act will be received by the autumn. It is impossible to say definitely at present how soon it may be possible to publish preliminary results of the inquiry. As regards comparisons with foreign countries, I have at present nothing to add to the reply that I gave to my hon. friend on 3rd July, last.

Company Voting Proxies.

Mr. WATT (Glasgow, College): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention has been called to the abuse by directors of companies, and especially of unsuccessful companies, of the power of proxy; and if so, will he introduce legislation either limiting or abrogating that power.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE: The power of voting by proxy has been recognised by the Companies Acts since the first Act of 1862, and, as at present advised, I am not prepared to introduce legislation to abrogate that power. There have, doubtless, been cases from time to time where the power has been abused, but, on the materials at present before me, I incline to the opinion that a greater evil might be created by preventing shareholders from voting on their own affairs unless they were able to be present at the meeting of the Company.

Imported Hops.

Mr. FELL: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if his attention has been called to the shipments of American hops which have arrived and are due to arrive during this week, and to the prices at which such hops are being sold; and if, under the special circumstances, he can prevent the next shipment from being cleared through the Custom House until the Committee now sitting has reported on the action necessary to be taken in the matter.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE: The quantity of hops imported into the United Kingdom from the United States of America during the week, 27th March to 2nd April, both dates inclusive, amounted to 34,058 cwts. I am informed that the latest average market prices for American hops grown in 1907 range from 35s. to 42s. per cwt. There is no power to detain importations of hops pending the Report of the Committee now inquiring into the matter.

Mr. FELL: Having regard to the fact that the Colorado beetle and other pests are introduced by these ships, could not the right hon. Gentleman have these hops examined microscopically?

[No Answer was returned.]

Australian Tariff.

Mr. LONSDALE: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether articles produced in non-British countries and finished by British labour are given a preference under the Australian tariff, and whether he can state the proportion of value representing British labour which is required to be certified to secure this privilege.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE: Exporters of goods from the United Kingdom desiring to obtain the advantages of the Australian preferential tariff are required to furnish a certificate to the effect that a substantial portion of the labour of the United Kingdom has entered into the production of every manufactured article included in the invoice to the extent of not less than one-fourth of its value in its condition ready for export. The form of certificate was published in the *Board of Trade Journal* for 30th January last.

Medical Examination of Engine-Drivers.

Mr. LONSDALE: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he has considered the Report of Lieutenant Colonel Yorke that the collision on the London and North-Western Railway near Atherton Station was due to the debilitated condition of the driver, and to the fact that he was in the last stage of a fatal complaint; and whether he intends to take any measures to secure the more frequent medical examination of engine drivers.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE: I am already in communication with the principal railway companies on the subject of the medical examination of engine-drivers, and I am now calling their special attention to Colonel Yorke's Report on the accident near Atherton.

Mr. WARDLE (Stockport): Is it not the fact that the regulator in this case was stiff, and may that not have had something to do with the accident?

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE: Colonel Yorke is clearly of opinion that the state of the health of the engine-driver was responsible for the accident.

Alleged Cruelty by a Mail Contractor.

Colonel LOCKWOOD: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether his attention has been called to the case of John Dixon, who was convicted at Swindon Borough Police Court on 23rd March of cruelty to a horse employed to draw the Post Office mails from Winterborne Monkton to Swindon; and what steps he proposes to take.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Mr. Sydney Buxton, Tower Hamlets, Poplar): I have received a Report on this subject; but I am not yet in a position to say what steps should be taken in the matter. When a decision is arrived at, I will communicate with the hon. Member.

Complaint against a Post Office Doctor.

Mr. J. DEVLIN (Belfast, W.): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether his attention has been called to the case of D. J. Long, a sorter at the South-Western District Post Office, London, who presented himself for examination on 27th February last to Dr. Brabant, the official doctor, who told him that there was not much wrong with him; is he aware than on 29th February, Long was taken ill, and that on 2nd March, Dr. Carmichael certified that Long was suffering from bronchial catarrh, and that Dr. Carmichael's certificate was refused by the Post Office officials, and Long informed that he must see the official doctor at once; whether he is aware that Dr. Carmichael thereupon certified that Long was unable to leave his room, and called in Dr. Charlesworth, who, on 6th March, certified Long as suffering from phthisis, and that on this certificate being forwarded by the postmaster, Mr. Carew, to Dr. Brabant, the latter reported that Long had had a sudden attack the previous week, due to tuberculosis, and that the diagnosis was not good at the time of writing; whether he is aware that Dr. Brabant neither examined Long on 27th February nor visited him at his home, that Long complained to his friends that Dr. Brabant took no interest in him whatever and did not care to see him, and that in January last Long was certified as unfit for work by Dr. Carmichael, whose certificate was not accepted, and two days' pay stopped from Long in consequence, which pay was recently refunded; whether any explanation has been asked of Dr. Brabant in regard to his conduct in the case; and whether any compensation will be made to Long's parents by the Department.

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON: I am making inquiry into the matter, and will communicate the result to the hon. Member.

Canadian Education Rating System.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education if he will state, for general convenience, the system in Canada under which rates are allocated for educational purposes to public and denominational schools.

The PRESIDENT of the BOARD of EDUCATION (Mr. McKenna, Monmouthshire, N.): I have drawn the attention of the High Commissioner of Canada to various points of importance essential to an understanding of the system of separate rating which were not explained in the general outline of the educational systems in Canada contained in Vol. IV. of the Special Reports on Educational Subjects, published in 1901. The High Commissioner has kindly undertaken to request the Provincial Governors of Quebec and Ontario for the requisite information and I am awaiting this reply. I hope that the facts ascertained will enable me to lay a Paper on the Table in due course.

Bromley Education Dispute.

Sir WILLIAM BULL: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education if his attention has been called to a recent case in Bromley where a man, named George Gooch, was summoned for refusing to send his daughter to a non-provided school two miles from his residence, since he was not permitted to send her to another non-provided school situate within 200 yards of his house; and whether steps can be taken to prevent such hardships, which arise owing to conflicts between neighbouring local authorities.

Mr. McKENNA: My attention has been called to the case referred to. I understand that negotiations are proceeding between the local education authorities for Beckenham and Penge as to the apportionment of the cost of educating children attending schools outside the area in which they reside. It is, in my opinion, extremely desirable that the two authorities should come to an agreement, and the Board are doing all in their power to assist them in securing this result.

Castle Morton Schoolroom.

Mr. GOULDING (Worcester): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education whether his attention has been called to the denial by the chairman of the Primrose League meeting recently held in the schoolroom of Castle Morton, Worcestershire, that the vicar took the chair; and also that lads were present or refreshments supplied to young persons; and whether he would ascertain the facts.

Mr. McKENNA: No, Sir; my attention has not been called to the statement referred to. Steps would, of course, be taken to ascertain the facts before the Board took any action in the matter.

Mr. GOULDING: Will the right hon. Gentleman see the necessity of making inquiry at once in view of the grossly unfounded attacks which have been made on the vicar owing to the Answer of the right hon. Gentleman?

Mr. McKENNA: Nothing I have said or done has caused that. I understand the hon. Gentleman now gives the same publicity to the denial as was given to the original assertion.

Mr. GOULDING: Does the right hon. Gentleman admit that the facts were not as stated by the Gentleman who put the original Question?

Mr. McKENNA: In my Answer I assumed that they were true and I stated the position in regard to the school trust.

Mr. MOORE (Armagh, N.): Does the right hon. Gentleman now withdraw his statement?

Mr. McKENNA: No, Sir, the statement I made was strictly accurate.

Mr. LONSDALE: Will the right hon. Gentleman make further inquiry?

Mr. McKENNA: Nothing I have said necessitates that. It is not the duty of the Board of Education to make such inquiries.

Southampton Catholic School.

Mr. BOLAND (Kerry, S.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education whether he is now prepared to receive a deputation from the local education authority of Southampton with reference to the Board's treatment of the Catholic secondary school in Southampton.

Mr. McKENNA: If the local education authority still desire it I am prepared to receive a deputation.

Legal Advisers to the Education Department.

Sir EDWARD SASSOON (Hythe): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education whether he will state the duties performed by the advising counsel to the Board, the salary attached to the post, by whom it is now held, how long it has been held by the present occupant, and who his predecessor was.

MR. MCKENNA: The post of advising counsel to the Board is now merged in that of the Principal Assistant Secretary in charge of the Legal Branch, Mr. H. M. Lindsell, C.B., whose salary is £1,500 per annum. The duties are to advise the Board on legal questions arising in the course of their administration. Mr. Lindsell was appointed advising counsel on 29th September, 1884. Mr. Lindsell's predecessor was Mr. Hodgson.

SIR EDWARD SASSOON: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education whether he will state the duties performed by the temporary barristers at the Board of Education, the salaries attached to such posts, the numbers so employed, and the number of appointments made since January, 1906.

MR. MCKENNA: The duties performed by temporary barristers are such duties as may be allotted to them by the principal assistant secretary in charge of the legal branch. The salary payable to a temporary barrister is one guinea per working day. The number employed at present is six. The number appointed since January, 1906, is seventeen.

Training Colleges and Religious Instruction.

LORD R. CECIL (Marylebone, E.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education, whether he will cause inquiries to be made as to the number of training colleges in which no religious instruction is given.

MR. MCKENNA: I do not think that the present moment would be an opportune one for considering a change of policy on the part of the Board in the direction indicated.

LORD R. CECIL: Does not the right hon. Gentleman think it of great importance in view of the educational proposals of the Government to ascertain which of the teachers have some religious knowledge and which have not?

MR. MCKENNA: My predecessors at the Board of Education have never thought it desirable to make such an inquiry as the noble Lord suggests.

Swansea School Dispute.

LORD R. CECIL: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education what is now the position with regard to the salaries of the teachers in the non-provided schools at Swansea; and whether the Board of Education have been since 26th August, 1907, in possession of receipts for the amounts paid by the managers for the arrears of salaries under the agreements since 1st April, 1907.

MR. MCKENNA: The question referred to is now under consideration by the Legal Department of the Board. The vouchers forwarded by the managers on 26th August, were returned to them on 17th October. Certain receipts subsequently sent to the Board are still in their possession.

LORD R. CECIL: Will the right hon. Gentleman say how long the legal advisers of the Board are likely to take?

MR. MCKENNA: I will endeavour to get the opinion from them as soon as I can, but the matters submitted to them are of extreme difficulty.

Education Summonses.

MR. BOWLES: I beg to ask Mr. Attorney-General whether he is aware that members of the local education committees which issue summonses to parents under the Education Acts are frequently also members of the local bench of magistrates which adjudicates upon them; and whether, in view of the fact that there is no appeal from the bench's decision in such cases, he will take steps, by legislation or otherwise, to prevent these gentlemen from acting in future as final judges in their own cause.

SIR W. ROBSON: Members of the Local Education Committee are not disqualified for sitting, but it is very undesirable that they should act as magistrates in cases in which they are concerned as members of the education authority, and I have no reason to suppose that they do so.

Mr. BOWLES: If I bring such a case to the notice of the hon. and learned Gentleman will he inquire?

Sir W. ROBSON: Certainly.

Sunday Entertainments in Clubs.

Viscount CASTLEREAGH: I beg to ask Mr. Attorney-General if his attention has been drawn to the fact that certain Liberal and Radical Clubs are in the habit of giving dramatic, variety, and other entertainments on Sunday mornings and evenings; and, if so, whether he is prepared to recommend prosecutions in such cases.

Sir W. ROBSON: No, Sir.

Viscount CASTLEREAGH: Will the hon. and learned Gentleman endeavour to use his influence with his colleagues who hold official positions in these clubs with a view to removing, if possible, a scandal which has found its way into the newspapers?

Sir W. ROBSON: I do not know the colleagues to whom the noble Lord alludes; and I am not aware that my influence would be effective in the matter at all.

Civil Service Estimates.

Sir WILLIAM BULL: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury what has been the cause of delay in circulating his Memorandum on the Civil Service Estimates.

Mr. RUNCIMAN: The Memorandum was circulated on the 1st instant. I regret that it was not possible to place it in the hands of hon. Members at an earlier date, but I cannot admit, in view of the dates on which the Memorandum has been circulated in previous years, that there has been any unusual delay.

Royal London Friendly Society.

Mr. O'GRADY (Leeds, E.): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury, whether he is aware of the attempt now being made by the committee of management of the Royal London Friendly Society to convert the society into a mutual insurance society under the Companies Acts; and, having regard to the methods recently employed by the committee of management in the conduct of the annual meeting of the society held at the Royal Albert Hall, London, on 25th February of this year, he will instruct the Registrar General to take action as provided in Section 76 of the Friendly Societies Act, 1896, in the event of the committee of management of the said society deciding to call further conversion meetings.

Mr. RUNCIMAN: The Chief Registrar of Friendly Societies informs me that he has no information on the subjects raised in the hon. Member's question. No application has been made to him under Section 76 of the Friendly Societies Act, 1896, and the provisions of the section do not come into force until such application is made.

Collecting Friendly Societies.

Mr. O'GRADY: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, whether he is aware that there is a tendency for some of the committees of management of the collecting friendly societies to convert those institutions into proprietary or mutual companies; and, having regard to the injury such conversions would cause to the interests of the members, as well as being subversive of their rights, whether he will appoint a Select Committee to inquire into the whole question of the collecting friendly societies with a view to recommending Amendments of the Friendly Societies Acts.

Mr. RUNCIMAN: I understand that the Liverpool Victoria Legal Friendly Society has established a subsidiary company to carry on the business which under the Friendly Societies and Collecting Societies Acts it cannot perform itself. The society, however, still exists in its original form. With this exception, if this can be called an exception, the Chief Registrar informs me that he has no knowledge of the tendency to which the hon. Member alludes, nor is he aware that the tendency, if it did exist, would cause injury to the interests of the members or would be subversive of their rights. But in any case he regards his existing powers as fully sufficient to enable him to deal with any danger that may arise from this source.

In these circumstances I do not think there is any need to appoint a Committee.

Clyde Herring Fishing.

MR. WATT: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland, if he will state when a full inquiry was last held as to the advantage or disadvantage of the use of the seine net to the herring fishing in the Clyde; and what evidence he requires before authorising a further inquiry to be made into the present state of the case, and into the opinion of the fisherman on the question.

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Mr. SINCLAIR, Forfarshire): The last formal inquiry into questions affecting the herring fishery in the Clyde area was held in December, 1902, but since then investigations have been conducted in connection therewith, and the local fishery officers have also furnished reports thereon from time to time. A lengthy Report on the subject by the Scientific Superintendent is contained in Part III. of the Board's Report for 1906, but the investigations have not yet been concluded, and, pending their conclusion, no good purpose would be served by holding another inquiry, particularly in view of the fact that there is a sharp conflict of opinion among those interested in the matter on the various points involved.

Case of Alexander C. Burrows, Dublin Stockbroker.

MR. MULDOON (Wicklow, E.): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland whether Alexander C. Burrows, lately a stockbroker in Dublin, had been accused of misappropriating a large sum of money; whether a warrant was out for his arrest; what is the charge made against him in the warrant, and when it was issued; when was Burrows last seen in Dublin; and when the police hope to bring the accused to trial.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. CHERRY, Liverpool, Exchange): In 1906 several warrants were issued against Alexander C. Burrows for misappropriating sums of money amounting in all to over £5,000. The first of these warrants was issued on 6th October, 1906, that is, three days after Burrows was last seen in Dublin. The police have made every effort to trace the accused, but so far without effect.

Woodford Malicious Burning Claim.

MR. JOHN ROCHE (Galway, E.): To ask Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland whether he is aware that a man named Michael Mahon, Woodford, County Galway, applied for £20 compensation for alleged malicious burning of his house, that the claim included an item of four £1 notes which he swore were in a tin box and burned, and that the police proved that the paper burned was a piece of foolscap, upon which the case was dismissed by the County Court Judge; whether he is aware that Mahon appealed to a Judge of Assize, and swore that a few nights before the appeal was heard, a threatening notice had been posted upon his door, having a picture of a coffin upon it, and stating that if he went to assize he would be doomed; whether the police proved that the notice was written by Mahon himself; and what action the Crown intend to take in the matter, and, if any, will it be taken immediately lest he may evade a prosecution.

MR. CHERRY: The facts of the case referred to in the Question as reported to me are as follows:—Mahon applied for £20 compensation for the malicious burning of his house on the night of 9th September, 1907. The claim included an item of £4 for four £1 notes which he swore were in a tin box in the house and were burned. The police secured the tin box in which were the burned ashes of paper, but were unable to form any opinion as to what kind of paper the ashes originally were. The claim was dismissed by the County Court Judge. Mahon appealed to the Judge of Assize, and on the hearing of the appeal swore that he had found a threatening notice on a window sill outside the house. Evidence was given on behalf of the police to show that this notice was prepared in the house. The decision of the County Court Judge was affirmed by the Judge of Assize. The Crown do not propose to take any action in the matter.

MR. JOHN ROCHE: I beg to ask Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland whether Michael Mahon has eluded justice by leaving the country.

MR. CHERRY: I am informed that Michael Mahon sailed for America from Queenstown on 26th March last.

MR. JOHN ROCHE: And you let him go.

King's Plates for Irish Horse Races.

MR. RIDSDALE (Brighton): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury if he is aware that a sum of £1,563 appears in the Estimates (Class 7, Miscellaneous) to be devoted to prizes for horse races in Ireland; whether any other sums for racing prizes are included in any of the Estimates; and whether opportunity will be afforded of challenging any of these items.

MR. RUNCIMAN: The answer to the first part of the Question is in the affirmative, and to the second in the negative. This item can be discussed like any other in the Estimates.

The Kingstown Pier Dispute.

MR. MOONEY (Newry): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether in view of the action now pending as to the right of the London and North Western Railway Company to use the Carlisle Pier, Kingstown, he will, until a decision has been given, restrict the use of Kingstown Harbour by the London and North Western Railway Company to the Victoria Wharf; whether he is aware that the London and North-Western Railway Company have already used this wharf for berthing their steamers with perfect safety and convenience; and whether he is aware that the Victoria Wharf has been used for a considerable time past by the line of steamers plying between Kingstown and the Isle of Man, to whom permission was refused to use the Carlisle Pier.

MR. RUNCIMAN: I understand that the Victoria Wharf is connected with the railway only by a single-line siding, inconveniently situated to the main line. There is no platform accommodation at the wharf, nor adequate means of shelter for passengers; and no proper facilities for transferring passengers and mails between trains and steamers. It is the case that the London and North Western Railway Company have been obliged to use this wharf recently, but only as a lie-by berth when owing to the deliberate obstruction of the City of Dublin Steam Packet Company no berth at Carlisle Pier was available. The weather fortunately has been favourable, but in certain conditions the use of the wharf even for this purpose might be attended by grave risk as well as inconvenience. In some conditions of weather it is difficult and dangerous to approach the wharf; in other conditions it is unsafe to lie at it, and in yet other conditions it is difficult, if not impossible, to get away from it. The statements contained in the last part of the hon. Member's question do not accurately represent the facts. Formerly, excursion steamers, belonging to the Isle of Man Company, used occasionally to visit the wharf, but this was found to be so inconvenient that the Company applied for permission to use the Carlisle Pier. When this application was refused they ceased to use the port at all and their steamers now always run to the North Wall.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN asked why, if approach to the Victoria Wharf was so risky, the late Queen Victoria and the King were able to get ashore there on their visits to Ireland?

MR. RUNCIMAN said these were isolated cases of the use of the wharf under favourable conditions. His answer referred to the daily use.

MR. CLANCY (Dublin County, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, whether, before the Government granted the London and North Western Railway Company permission to use the Government harbour at Kingstown for its passenger steamers at a nominal charge, they were aware that the reason why Parliament in 1902 decided that the company should pay the charges now fixed for all steamers alike, was that it had been proved before Committees of the two Houses, that the company had reduced to little or nothing the register tonnage of its vessels by using for that purpose the peculiar measurement rules then in force; whether they were aware that largely to accommodate this company the Dublin Harbour authority had expended large sums of money in dock works; and, if the Government were not aware of those facts, if they will now cancel the arrangement by which the free use of Kingstown Harbour is given to the company at the expense of the revenues of the Port of Dublin.

Mr. RUNCIMAN: The Answer to the first two Questions is in the negative. With regard to the last Question I see no reason for cancelling the permission given to the London and North Western Railway Company, which has been granted in the interests of the public.

Mr. CLANCY: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, with reference to the permission given to the London and North Western Railway Company to use the Government harbour at Kingstown for their passenger steamers at a nominal charge, whether he is aware that in 1902 Parliament, by the Dublin Port and Docks Board Act of that year, decided that the company should in future pay the charge on its steamers now fixed by the Dublin Harbour authority; whether the Government, by now allowing the company to use Kingstown Harbour practically free of charge, are enabling it to evade compliance with the decision of Parliament; and, if so, whether there is any precedent for such action on the part of the Government.

Mr. RUNCIMAN: The Act of 1902 does not refer specifically to the dues payable by the passenger steamers of the London and North Western Railway Company. In any case the Act only affects steamers that enter the jurisdiction of the Dublin Port and Docks Board. Section 70 of the Act provides that nothing in the Act shall render it obligatory on the Commissioners of Kingstown Harbour to levy any rates or dues on, amongst other classes, vessels carrying His Majesty's mails, and vessels engaged exclusively in passenger traffic. The London and North Western Railway steamers now running between Kingstown and Holyhead come under both of these categories. The London and North Western Railway Company enjoyed the same facilities at Kingstown Harbour as have lately been given to them in respect of the landing and embarking of passengers at the Carlisle Pier, during the years 1859, 1860, and part of 1861. The dues then paid were 5s. per trip per steamer. In those years the Company ran a daily service of express steamers between the Carlisle Pier and Holyhead.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, if he will explain why the London and North Western Railway Company has been given permission to use Carlisle Pier, Kingstown, at a nominal charge for their passenger steamers; and what is the estimated yearly gain to the company by reason of this permission, which involves a loss of revenue to the harbour authority.

Mr. RUNCIMAN: As I have already informed the hon. Member for North Dublin, the permission was given to the London and North Western Railway Company in the interests of the travelling public. I have no information as regards the last part of the hon. Member's Question.

Mr. CLANCY: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether the nominal charge of 5s. per trip for the use of the Carlisle Pier, Kingstown, by the steamers of the London and North Western Railway Company is the sole consideration for such use; and, if not, what other consideration has been given or promised by the company.

Mr. RUNCIMAN: The dues charged for the use of the pier and certain other expenses which will be incurred by the Commissioners of Kingstown Harbour are the only consideration paid by the London and North Western Railway Company.

Mr. CLANCY: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, with reference to the permission given to the London and North Western Railway Company to use Carlisle Pier, Kingstown, for their passenger steamers at a merely nominal charge, whether he is aware that the reason given by Lord Stalbridge, chairman of the company, for seeking such permission was to evade the payment of the dues fixed by the Dublin Port and Docks Board for all such steamers equally; whether the gain to the company by the concession made by the Treasury will amount to several thousands of pounds a year; and, if so, whether there is any precedent for Government action involving the deprivation of a harbour authority of revenue for the benefit of a railway or other company.

Mr. RUNCIMAN: I have no information as to the reasons which influenced the London and North Western Railway Company to transfer part of their passenger service to Kingstown, or as to the saving which is effected by the transfer; but I understand that legal proceedings are pending between the Dublin Port and Docks Board and the company with regard to the rates charged at Dublin. As regards the latter part of the Question I cannot say whether any similar case has occurred elsewhere; but I may remind the hon. Member that special provisions were inserted in the Dublin Port and Docks Act of 1902, with the assent of the Dublin Port and Docks Board, concerning the dues chargeable on passenger vessels at Kingstown.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury if he will cause to be laid upon the Table of the House forthwith all correspondence that has passed on the subject of the use of the Carlisle Pier, Kingstown, by vessels other than the mail steamers, between the Treasury and the Commissioners of Public Works, the Commissioners of Kingstown Harbour, the London and North Western Railway Company, the City of Dublin Steam Packet Company, and any other steamboat company, or any individual or individuals, or Government Department, between 1st January, 1907, and the present date; and whether he will now publish all the correspondence and papers dealing with the agreement come to in 1898, when it was agreed by the Treasury to pay £6,500 per annum for the acceleration of the day mail service, and the correspondence relating to the altered arrangements now made between the Treasury or the Post Office and the London and North Western Company.

Mr. RUNCIMAN: As I have already stated I am considering what Papers can be laid.

Irish Primary Education Grant.

Mr. J. MURPHY (Kerry, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury if he is now in a position to state the amount of the increased grant to be made in connection with Irish primary education; if this money is to be allocated by the Commissioners of National Education in pursuance of a scheme already fixed upon and approved by the Treasury, or whether they will be free to decide themselves on the method of the expenditure after the money has been received by them.

Mr. RUNCIMAN: The hon. Member doubtless refers to my statement on 12th March, in answer to Questions by the hon. Member for Waterford. The proposed increase of grant to which I referred was in respect of teachers' salaries only. The details of the scheme and the total amount involved are still under consideration.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND: Will the hon. Gentleman take whatever steps are necessary to make the increase effective this year?

Mr. RUNCIMAN: Yes, Sir.

THE RESIGNATION OF THE PRIME MINISTER.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Asquith, Fifeshire, E.): Mr. Speaker, since the House rose on Friday, His Majesty the King has been pleased to accept from the Prime Minister the resignation of his office, and the Government is now without a head. This is not the occasion on which it would be possible or appropriate for me to attempt to do justice to the great qualities of our revered and trusted chief, or to enlarge on his long and splendid services to the State. For the moment I will not trust myself to do more than to say that in the annals of our country there is no man who, after long years spent in the thick of public contention, ever laid down the highest office under the Crown more universally or more deservedly beloved. There is not, I believe, a single Member in any quarter of the House who has not come down here to-day feeling himself under the shadow of not merely a political, but a personal loss. In these conditions it is clearly impossible that the House can for a time proceed effectually with public business; and in the circumstances it must, I apprehend, take some little time before the necessary arrangements can be completed. That being so, it is my duty to move now two Resolutions. The first is: "That all Committees have leave to sit, notwithstanding any adjournment of the House, until the adjournment for the Easter Recess." The second Resolution is: "That this House do now adjourn until Tuesday, 14th April." I may, perhaps, add that it is necessary to sit on that day for the purposes of a Royal Commission and also possibly for other business of a formal character; and when that is transacted I should imagine that the House would then be asked to adjourn for the Easter Recess.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR (City of London): I do not imagine that by the forms of the House it is at all necessary that there should be a seconder for either of the two Motions which the Leader of the House has just made. But I rise to say on behalf of my friends and myself that, of course, we shall be glad to do any thing in our power to facilitate the course of public business, and to render easier the task which has fallen upon the Members of the Government in consequence of the event of which the Chancellor of the Exchequer has been good enough to give us information to-day. I do not propose to deal with the subject which is necessarily in the thoughts of every man I am addressing. If I did desire to deal with it, I could not add anything to the admirable words which have fallen from the Chancellor of the Exchequer. I associate myself with those words to the fullest extent, and I desire to say on behalf of my friends and myself how deeply we regret the cause which has rendered it necessary for the Prime Minister to resign his high office and how deep is our sympathy with him on the present occasion.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): I hope the House will not grudge me the opportunity of saying in one or two brief sentences how deeply my colleagues and I feel the loss of the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister. We have had long experience of the right hon. Gentleman; and during the many long years during which we have worked in connection with him in the cause of Ireland we have had again and again convincing proofs that he was a sincere friend of Irish liberty and Irish rights. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer spoke of this as not only a political loss, but a personal one. Those of us on these benches who have been brought into personal contact with the Prime Minister—and I am one of those who have been brought a good deal into personal contact with him—will certainly echo that sentiment. We all feel that in his disappearance, Ireland has suffered a loss second only to the loss she suffered when Mr. Gladstone retired from the post of Prime Minister of this country. Knowing the right hon. Gentleman's sentiments of friendliness to our cause and country, I am sure he will be pleased to hear the expression of our view and that we have always regarded him as the consistent, brave, and sincere friend of Ireland and her cause. I believe there is no Nationalist living in any part of the world who will not deeply deplore the fact that he has been taken away from the arena of public life. I am glad the House has allowed me the opportunity of saying these few words and of associating myself most heartily with what has fallen from the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

COMMITTEES.

Ordered, That all Committees have leave to sit, notwithstanding any adjournment of the House, until the adjournment for the Easter Recess.—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

ADJOURNMENT.

Resolved, That this House do now adjourn until Tuesday, 14th April.—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

Adjourned accordingly at two minutes before Four o'clock till Tuesday, 14th April.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Tuesday, 14th April, 1908.

COMMISSION.

The following Bills received the Royal Assent:—Army (Annual); Herne Bay Pier.

The Lord Hemphill—Sat first in Parliament after the death of his father.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 3) Bill [H.L.] (No. 48).—A Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board for Ireland relating to the county borough of Belfast and the urban district of Letterkenny; And

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order (No. 4) Bill [H.L.] (No. 49).—A Bill to confirm a certain Provisional Order of the Local Government Board for Ireland relating to the rural district of Rathdown (No. 1).

Were presented by the Lord Colebrooke (for the Lord Denman); read 1ª; to be printed; and referred to the Examiners.

Derby Gas Bill; London, Brighton, and South Coast Railway Bill [H.L.].—Reported, with Amendments.

Tramways Order Confirmation (No. 1) Bill [H.L.].—Reported, with Amendments, and recommitted to a Committee of the Whole House.

Standing Orders Committee.—Report from, that the Standing Orders not complied with in respect of the Alliance and other Assurance and Insurance Companies Bill [H.L.] ought to be dispensed with, and the Bill allowed to proceed.

And that the Standing Orders not complied with in respect of the petition for an additional provision in the Wath-upon-Dearne Urban District Council Gas Bill [H.L.] ought to be dispensed with, and leave given to the Committee on the Bill to insert the additional provision.

Read, and agreed to.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

CANCER RESEARCH (COLONIES).

Further correspondence relating to the Cancer Research Scheme (in continuation of [Cd. 2818], February, 1906.

TRANSVAAL.

Correspondence relating to the Transvaal Indentured Labour Laws Temporary Continuance Act, 1907.

TREATY SERIES.

No. 8. (1908) Supplementary Agreement between the United Kingdom and Germany respecting commercial travellers' samples; signed at Berlin, 10th March, 1908.

No. 9. (1908) Accession of Spain to the declaration respecting maritime law; signed at Paris, 16th April, 1856, 18th January, 1898.

Turkey, No. 2. (1908) Further correspondence respecting proposals by His Majesty's Government for reforms in Macedonia (in continuation of "Turkey, No. 1. (1908)," [Cd. 3958].).

TRADE REPORTS: ANNUAL SERIES.

No. 3969. United States.

No. 3970. Persia (Provinces of Seistan and Kain).

MISCELLANEOUS.

No. 667. Brazil (Mining Industry in the State of Minas Geraes).

BOARD OF EDUCATION.

Statement showing the cases in which the Board of Education have received applications from local education authorities for special grants for the building of new public elementary schools, and the stage which each case had reached on 31st March, 1908.

Regulations for secondary schools (in force from 1st August, 1908, in

England, excluding Wales and Monmouthshire).

Regulations for the preliminary education of elementary school teachers: (1) Pupil teacher regulations; (2) Bursary regulations; (3) Student teacher regulations (in force from 1st August, 1908, in England, excluding Wales and Monmouthshire).

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND).

(Northern and Highland Divisions). General Report for the year 1907.

Regulations for the preliminary education, training, and certification of teachers for various grades of schools, 1908.

ARMY.

Return showing the establishment of each unit of Militia in the United Kingdom, and the numbers present, absent, and wanting to complete at the training of 1907 (in continuation of [Cd. 3364.], of Session 1907).

JUDICIAL STATISTICS (ENGLAND AND WALES), 1906 (PART II. CIVIL JUDICIAL STATISTICS).

Statistics relating to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, the House of Lords, the Supreme Court of Judicature, County Courts, and other Civil Courts, edited by Sir John Macdonnell, C.B., L.L.D., a Master of the Supreme Court.

ROYAL OBSERVATORY (EDINBURGH).

Eighteenth Annual Report of the Astronomer-Royal for Scotland.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (SCOTLAND).

Return of the areas, population, and valuation of counties, burghs, and parishes in Scotland.

AGRICULTURAL AND TECHNICAL INSTRUCTION FOR IRELAND (DEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEE ON IRISH FORESTRY).

Report. Minutes of evidence, appendix, and index.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION.

Return of advances made under the Irish Land Act, 1903, during the month of April, 1907.

COST OF LIVING IN GERMAN TOWNS.

Report of an inquiry by the Board of Trade into working class rents, housing, and retail prices, together with rates of wages in certain occupations in the principal industrial towns of the German Empire; with an introductory memorandum, and a comparison of conditions in Germany and the United Kingdom.

HORSE BREEDING.

Twelfth Report of the Royal Commission on Horse Breeding.

Presented (by command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

UNIVERSITIES (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1889.

Annual Report on the state of the finances of the University of St. Andrew's under the provisions of Section 30 of the Act, for the year 1906–1907.

Annual Statistical Report by the University Court of the University of St. Andrew's to the Secretary for Scotland, under the provisions of Section 30 of the Act, for the year 1906–1907.

LIFE ASSURANCE COMPANIES.

Statements of accounts, and of life assurance and annuity business, and abstracts of actuarial reports deposited with the Board of Trade, under Section 10 of "The Life Assurance Companies Act," 1870, during the year ended 31st December, 1908.

IRISH LAND PURCHASE FUND (ACCOUNTS, 1906–1907).

Accounts of receipts and payments by the Commissioners for the Reduction of the National Debt in respect of the capital and income of the Irish Land Purchase Fund, in the year ended 31st March, 1907, together with the report of the Comptroller and Auditor-General thereon.

INDIA (LOANS RAISED IN ENGLAND).

Return of all loans raised in England under the provisions of any Acts of Parliament, chargeable on the revenues of India, outstanding at the commencement of the half-year ended 31st March, 1908, with the rates of interest and total amount payable thereon, and the date of the termination of each loan, the debt incurred during the half-year, the moneys raised thereby during the half-year, the loans paid off or discharged during the half-year, and the loans outstanding at the close of the half-year; stating, so far as the public convenience will allow, the purpose or service for which moneys have been raised during the half-year.

NAVAL SAVINGS BANKS.

Account of deposits in Naval Savings Banks and the payments thereof, and of interest thereon, of all investments under the Naval Savings Banks Act, 1866, and the application of the interest or dividends accruing in respect thereof, and of the proceeds of any sale of any stocks, annuities, or securities during the financial year 1906–1907.

MERCHANT SHIPPING (MERCANTILE MARINE FUND) ACT, 1898.

Draft Order in Council altering the exemptions in the Second Schedule to the Act, by adding thereto sailing yachts not registered in the British islands which came into territorial waters adjacent to the United Kingdom with the sole object of taking part in yacht racing.

EGYPTIAN GUARANTEED LOAN OF 1885.

Account up to 31st March, 1908.

GREEK LOAN OF 1898.

Account up to 31st March, 1908.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

PRIVATE LEGISLATION PROCEDURE (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1899.

Report from the Committee of Selection, that the following Lords be proposed to the House as the panel of Lords to act as Commissioners under the Act, viz.:—

L. Saye and Sele;
L. Bowes (*E. Strathmore and Kinghorn*);

agreed to; and the said Lords appointed accordingly.

House adjourned at five minutes past Three o'clock, to Tuesday, the 5th of May next, at a quarter past Four o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Tuesday, 14*th April*, 1908.

The House met at a quarter before Three of the Clock.

NEW WRITS.

For Borough of Dewsbury, in the room of Walter Runciman, esquire, President of the Board of Education.—(*Mr. Whiteley.*)

Borough of Manchester (North-West Division). Right hon. Winston Leonard Spencer Churchill, President of the Committee of Privy Council for Trade and Plantations.—(*Mr. Whiteley*).

Borough of Sheffield (Central Division). Colonel Sir Charles Edward Howard Vincent, K.C.M.G., C.B., deceased.—(*Mr. Henry Forster.*)

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS NOT PREVIOUSLY INQUIRED INTO COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table, Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto, have been complied with, viz.:—Llanelly Gas Bill [Lords].

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time.

PORT OF LONDON BILL (STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE THERETO COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, pursuant to the Order of the House of the 3rd day of April, That, in the case of the following Bill, the Standing Orders which are applicable thereto have been complied with, viz.:—Port of London Bill.

Great Eastern Railway (General Powers) Bill.—Read the third time, and passed.

Blaydon and Ryton Water (Transfer) Bill; Dover Graving Docks Bill.—As amended, considered; to be read the third time.

Knott End Railway Bill.—As amended, considered; a clause added; Bill to be read the third time.

Louth and East Coast Railway (Transfer) Bill.—As amended, considered; to be read the third time.

Private Bills, etc. Ordered, That Standing Orders 39, 128, and 230 be suspended, and that the time for depositing Petitions and Memorials against Private Bills, or against any Bill to confirm any Provisional Order or Provisional Certificate, and for depositing duplicates of any Documents relating to any Bill to confirm any Provisional Order or Provisional Certificate, also for depositing at the Private Bill Office all Documents relating to any Order under The Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, be extended to the first day on which the House shall sit after the Recess.—(*The Deputy-Chairman.*)

Sligo and Arigna Railway Bill. Petition for additional Provision; referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have agreed to Army (Annual) Bill, without Amendment.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to explain section ninety-two of The Patents and Designs Act, 1907." [Patents and Designs Bill [Lords.]

Also, a Bill, intituled "An Act to authorise the introduction of proportional representation in Municipal Elections; and for other purposes." [Municipal Representation Bill [Lords.]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act for empowering the Cardiff Railway Company to construct new railways; for extending the time for the purchase of certain lands and for the completion of certain railways; for reviving the powers of the Company to construct certain works; for confirming an agreement between the Caerphilly Urban District Council and the Company; and for other purposes." [Cardiff Railway Bill [Lords.]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to empower the Metropolitan Electric Tramways, Limited, to construct a new tramway and widen certain streets and roads; and for other purposes." [Metropolitan Electric Tramways Bill [Lords.]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to increase and regulate the capital of the Argentine North Eastern Railway Company, Limited, and to fund the arrears of dividend on its preferred stock by the issue of fully paid stock; and for other purposes." [Argentine North Eastern Railway Bill [Lords.]

And, also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to provide for the granting of superannuation allowances to the officers and servants of the council of the metropolitan borough of Saint Marylebone; and for other purposes." [Saint Marylebone Borough Council (Superannuation) Bill [Lords.]

Cardiff Railway Bill [Lords]; Metropolitan Electric Tramways Bill [Lords]; Argentine North Eastern Railway Bill [Lords]; St. Marylebone Borough Council (Superannuation) Bill [Lords]. Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

Manchester Corporation Bill. Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

Margate Corporation Bill. Reported, with Amendments, from the Police and Sanitary Committee; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

Widnes Corporation Bill. Reported, with Amendments, from the Police and Sanitary Committee; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

PETITIONS.

COAL MINES (EIGHT HOURS) (No. 2) BILL.

Petition from Edinburgh, against; to lie upon the Table.

COAL MINES (EIGHT HOURS) (No. 2) BILL.

Petitions in favour: From Abram; Auchinraith; Bailey Brook; Blackrod;

Brereton; Bulwell; Carlton Main; Chamber Lane; Codnor; Dearne Valley; Dechmont; Denby Hall; Giffnock; Halifax; Hartshay; Heath Hayes; Hednesford; Hewlett; Ilkeston; Jubilee; Langley; Larkhall; Littleton (two); Loscoe; Newstead; Oakwell; Pentrick; Plank Lane; Railway Pit; Ryhill; Stafford; Stanley; Stanley Common; Stotham; Tyldesley; West Cannock; Whiteley; Woodside (two); and, Wooley; to lie upon the Table.

DAIRIES (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Edinburgh, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL.

Petition from Wandsworth against; to lie upon the Table.

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL.

Petitions in favour: From Gillingham; Peterborough; Spennymore; Westbury on Severn; and, Ystrad Meurig; to lie upon the Table.

FOREIGN TRAWLERS REGULATION BILL.

Petition from Edinburgh, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES BILL.

Petition from Wandsworth, against; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSED PREMISES (EXCLUSION OF CHILDREN).

Petitions for legislation: From Birmingham; and, Dundee; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSING BILL.

Petitions against: From Althorpe; Anglesey; Ansty; Barnsley (three); Belton; Castle Eaton; Cheltenham; Cirencester; Coombe Bissett; Crowle (six); Darlington; Derrythorpe; Dinton; Dodworth; Eastoft; Epworth; Fenny Stratford; Great Brickhill; Haxey; Hitchin (three); Hunslet; Inverness; Isle of Wight; Kingsdown; Leeds (nine); Monk Bretton; Netheravon; Penrith; Platts Common; Reading; Rotherhithe; Salisbury (two); Sandtoft; Stony Stratford; Swallowcliffe; Swindon; Tadcaster; Tisbury; Wandsworth; Wetherby; Winslow; Wolverton; Wombwell (three); and, Working; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSING BILL.

Petitions for alteration: From Beeston; Blairgowrie; Idle; Leeds; and Lincoln; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSING BILL.

Petitions in favour; from Alyth; Annandale; Ardsley; Atherton (twenty); Auckland Park; Ayr; Barnsley (three); Barr; Baxenden; Beaconsfield; Beeston (two); Belfast (three); Belmont; Birkdale (three); Birmingham; Bishop Auckland (three); Blaenogwy; Blairgowrie (four); Bodewryd; Bodffordd; Bolton; Bonhill; Bootle; Beverley; Bridgeton (two); Briercliffe (four); Brighouse (two); Brora; Byers Green; Bryngwran; Brynsiencyn; Burrelton; Bury; Caergeilwg; Cathcart; Cefneithin; Cemaes (three); Cemaes Bay; Chelmsford; Chelsea; Chertsey; Chil-well; Cinderford; Clitheroe; Closburn; Cockerton; Coggeshall; Crossens; Cross Hands (five); Cwmivor; Dalmarnock; Dalmellington; Dalmuir; Dalrymple; Darlington (twenty-three); Dean Bank; Dennistoun; Denton; Deptford; Dornoch; Dumbarton (three); Dunkeld; Dyffryn Bargoed; East Grinstead; Edinburgh (five); Eldon Lane; Exeter (two); Formby; Freshwater; Fulham Cross; Gainsborough; Girvan; Glasgow (thirteen); Glen Urquhart; Gorton (two); Govan; Great Houghton; Greenhead; Greetland; Gwernogle; Halifax (five); Hanwick; Haslingden; Helensburgh; Helsby; Heneglwys; High Blantyre; Hightal; Holyhead; Honor Oak; Hopetown; Horwich (five); Ipswich; Kelty; Kelvedon; Keswick; Kexborough; Kilcreggan; Kingussie; Kirkconnel; Kirkwall (two); Lambeth Road; Lambeth; Lanark; Langholm; Langley Mill (two); Leeds (two); Leigh; Lightcliffe (two); Lincoln; Little Lever; Liverpool (three); Llanbordy; Llanddona; Llandebie; Llandilo (five); Llanfechell: Llanadwabadr; Llanstephan; Llanydthen; London; Manchester; Mauchline; Manordeilo; Mapplewell; Marlborough; Michaelstone-y-Vedw; Moffat; Mouldsworth; Muirkirk (two); Mynydd Parys; Nelson (four); Newbridge; Newcastle-on-Tyne (five); New Cathcart; Newchurch; New Cumnock; Newport (Isle of Wight) (two); Nitson: North Shields; Nottingham; Notting

Hill; Nunhead; Oakenshaw; Oldham; Openshaw; Oswestry; Parkstone; Parton; Peckham; Peckham Rye; Penybane; Penzance; Percy Main; Peterborough; Petersfield; Plumstead; Pollokshaws (two); Pollokshields; Pwll; Radcliffe; Rastrick; Rawtenstall; Reading; Rutherglen (two); Ryhill; St. Clears (two); Sancreed; Scarborough; Sevenoaks; Shanklin (two); Shildon (two); Shipley; Snailbeach; Southampton; Southport (thirty-three); Spennymore; Stair; Stirling; Stockport (four); Streatham; Street; Strickland; Sunnybrow; Tantobie; Tindale; Tooting; Tottenham (two); Tottington; Trelech; Troon; Truro (three); Tulse Hill; Tynemouth (three); Waterfoot; West Chilton; Westhoughton; Westminster; Whelley; White; Wigton; Wishaw; Wombwell (two); Wood Green; Woolston; and, Ystradgynlais; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSING BILL AND LIQUOR TRAFFIC (LOCAL OPTION) (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petitions from Clydebank, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

LIQUOR TRAFFIC (LOCAL OPTION) (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petitions in favour: From Cambuslang; Clydebank; Cornhill; Croy; Edinburgh; Galstone; Hightar; Kirkwall (two); Milnathort; and Peebles; to lie upon the Table.

MERCHANDISE MARKS BILL.

Petitions from Edinburgh, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

METROPOLITAN SEWERS AND DRAINS BILL.

Petitions from Bermondsey, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

PUBLIC HOUSES (EXCLUSION OF CHILDREN) (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petitions in favour; From Coupar Angus; and Inverness; to lie upon the Table.

REPRESENTATION OF THE PEOPLE BILL.

Petitions from Wandsworth, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF FOOD AND DRUGS ACT (AMENDMENT) (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petitions from Edinburgh, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY BILL.

Petitions in favour: From Arlington Road, N.W.; Bury; and, Wavendon; to lie upon the Table.

WOMEN'S ENFRANCHISEMENT BILL.

Petitions in favour: From Ipswich; Lambeth and other places; and, West Kensington; to lie upon the Table.

PARLIAMENTARY PAPERS (RECESS).

The following Papers, presented by Command of His Majesty during the Recess, were delivered to the Librarian of the House of Commons during the Recess, pursuant to the Standing Order of the 14th August 1896.

1. Turkey (No. 2, 1908). Copy of Further Correspondence respecting Proposals by His Majesty's Government for Reforms in Macedonia.

2. Treaty Series (No. 8, 1908). Copy of Supplementary Agreement between the United Kingdom and Germany, respecting Commercial Travellers' Samples, signed at Berlin, 10th March 1908.

3. Treaty Series (No. 9, 1908). Copy of Accession of Spain to the Declaration respecting Maritime Law, signed at Paris 16th April 1856, 18th January 1908.

4. Trade Reports (Miscellaneous Series). Copy of Diplomatic and Consular Report, Miscellaneous Series, No. 667.

5. Trade Reports (Annual Series). Copies of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 3969 and 3970.

6. Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction (Ireland) (Departmental Committee). Copy of Report of the Departmental Committee on Irish Forestry, together with Minutes of Evidence, Appendices, and Index.

7. Transvaal. Copy of Correspondence relating to the Transvaal Indentured Labour Laws Temporary Continuance Act, 1907.

8. Local Government (Scotland). Copy of Return of the Areas, Population,

and Valuation of Counties, Burghs, and Parishes in Scotland.

9. Judicial Statistics (England and Wales). Copy of Judicial Statistics for England and Wales, 1906. Part II. (Civil Judicial Statistics), edited by Sir John Macdonell, C.B., LL.D., Master of the Supreme Court.

10. Royal Observatory (Edinburgh). Copy of Eighteenth Annual Report of the Astronomer Royal for Scotland.

11. Cost of Living (German Towns). Copy of Report of an Inquiry by the Board of Trade into Working Class Rents, Housing, and Retail Prices, together with Rates of Wages in certain Occupations in the Principle Industrial Towns of the German Empire, with an Introductory Memorandum and a Comparison of Conditions in Germany and the United Kingdom.

Ordered, That the said Papers do lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND) (GENERAL REPORTS).

Copy presented, of General Report by the Chief Inspector of the Northern and Highland Divisions of Scotland for the year 1907 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND.)

Copy presented, of Regulations for the Preliminary Education, Training, and Certification of Teachers for various Grades of Schools, 1908 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

UNIVERSITY OF ST. ANDREWS.

Copy presented, of Annual Statistical Report by the University Court of the University of St. Andrews for 1906–7 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 118.]

UNIVERSITY OF ST. ANDREWS.

Copy presented, of Annual Report on the State of the Finances of the University for the year 1906–7 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 119.]

NAVAL SAVINGS BANKS.

Account presented, of Deposits in Naval Savings Banks, and the payments thereof, and the interest thereon, etc., during the financial year 1906–7 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 120.]

LIFE ASSURANCE COMPANIES.

Copy presented, of Statements of Accounts, and of Life Assurance and Annuity Business and Abstracts of Actuarial Reports, deposited with the Board of Trade during the year ended 31st December, 1907 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 121.]

MERCHANT SHIPPING (MERCANTILE MARINE FUND) ACT, 1898.

Copy presented, of Draft Order in Council altering the Exemptions in the Second Schedule to the Act, by adding thereto Sailing Yachts not registered in the British Islands which come into territorial waters adjacent to the United Kingdom with the sole object of taking part in Yacht Racing [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION.

Copy presented, of Return of advances made under The Irish Land Act, 1903, during the month of April, 1907 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

EAST INDIA (LOANS RAISED IN ENGLAND.)

Copy presented, of Return of all Loans raised in England, chargeable on the Revenues of India, outstanding at the commencement of the half-year ending on the 31st March, 1908 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 122.]

BOARD OF EDUCATION.

Copy presented, of Statement showing the Cases in which the Board of Education have received applications from Local Education Authorities for Special Grants for the building of New Public Elementary Schools and the stage which each Case had reached on 31st March, 1908 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

BOARD OF EDUCATION.

Copy presented, of Regulations for Secondary Schools in force from 1st August, 1908, in England (excluding Wales and Monmouthshire) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

BOARD OF EDUCATION.

Copy presented, of Regulations for the Preliminary Education of Elementary School Teachers: (1) Pupil Teacher Regulations; (2) Bursary Regulations; (3) Student Teacher Regulations; in force from 1st August, 1908 in England (excluding Wales and Monmouthshire) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

HORSE-BREEDING (ROYAL COMMISSION.)

Copy presented, of Twelfth Report of the Royal Commission on Horse-Breeding [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

GREEK LOAN OF 1898.

Account presented, up to 31st March, 1908 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

EGYPTIAN GUARANTEED LOAN OF 1885.

Account presented, up to 31st March, 1908 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

PAPER LAID UPON THE TABLE BY THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE.

IRISH LAND PURCHASE FUND.

Accounts of the Commissioners for the Reduction of the National Debt in respect of the Capital and Income of the Irish Land Purchase Fund in the year ended 31st March, 1907, together with the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon [by Act]; to be printed. [No. 123.]

TRAMWAYS AND LIGHT RAILWAYS (STREET AND ROAD).

Return ordered, "of Street and Road Tramways and Light Railways authorised by Act or Order, showing the amount of capital authorised, paid up, and expended; the length of line authorised, and the length open for public traffic down to the 31st day of December, 1907, in respect of companies, and the 31st day of March, 1908, in respect of local authorities; the gross receipts, working expenditure, net receipts, and appropriation of net receipts; the number of passengers conveyed, the number of miles run by cars, and the quantity of electrical energy used during the year ended on the foregoing dates respectively; together with the number of horses, engines, and cars at those dates (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 301, of Session 1907.")—(*Mr. Lloyd-George.*)

LOANS CONTRACTED BY LOCAL AUTHORITIES.

Order [26th August, 1907] for a Return relative thereto read, and discharged; and, instead thereof:—

Return ordered, "showing the following particulars with respect to Town Councils, other Urban District Councils, and Metropolitan Borough Councils in England and Wales, that is to say (a) area of District of each Council; (b) population of District according to the last Census; (c) rateable or assessable value of District; (d) rates in the pound of the principal rates raised in the year 1905–6, by, or for the purposes of, each Council; (e) the outstanding balance, at the end of the year 1905–6, of Loans contracted by, or repayable by, each Council, distinguishing between (1) Loans for waterworks, gasworks, electric lighting, tramways, markets, or harbours, docks, etc.; and (2) Loans for other purposes; and (f) amounts remaining in the Sinking Funds, Loans Funds, and Redemption Funds of each Council at the end of the year 1905–6."—(*Mr. Henry Forster.*)

LAW CHARGES AND CRIMINAL PROSECUTIONS (IRELAND).

Return ordered, "Showing the amounts voted for Law Charges and Criminal Prosecutions in Ireland in each financial year from 1881–2 to 1907–8, both inclusive, distinguishing Original from Supplementary Votes, and showing also the audited expenditure in each year, so far as practicable, and the amount surrendered to the Exchequer at the end of each year, with notes explanatory of any new charges to the Vote in the period mentioned."—(*Mr. Long.*)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Telegraphic Delays at Cork Post Office.

MR. A. ROCHE (Cork): To ask the Postmaster-General whether his attention has been called to complaints recently made to the authorities at the Cork post office regarding delay on Press and commercial telegrams; will he cause a Return to be kept of all delays exceeding fifteen minutes in the despatch of commercial telegrams at Cork for one month, and to furnish an explanation for the cause of such delays, if any, and a Return of all waits given to stations working to Cork during that time; will be also give a Return of the deaths and sick leave of the Cork Post Office staff for the five years ended 31st December, 1907, as compared with the previous five years; and whether, seeing that the local medical officer attributed the increased sick leave to the hustling methods recently adopted, he will take steps to see that the Cork Post Office staff perform their work under conditions less trying to their health.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) Complaints such as those to which the hon. Member refers have not recently been made either to the Postmaster of Cork, or to the Surveyor, or to me. Returns made in the ordinary course, now before me, show no undue delay, and I see no reason for having special Returns taken. Seven deaths occurred among the indoor staff at the Cork Post Office during the quinquennial period ending December, 1902, and five during the five years ending December, 1907. The average annual sick-rate during the first period was 5·2 days for men and 6·9 days for women, and during the second period 8·5 days for men and 13·1 for women. The former rates were below the average for the Irish Post Office staff generally, while the latter rates were slightly above the normal as regards men and normal as regards women. Last year the sick-rate at Cork stood lower than it did in any of the preceding four years, with the single exception of the rate for women in 1904. There is no reason to think that the conditions of working which prevail at Cork are unduly trying. The medical officer (whose views are not accurately represented in the Question) states that while some temporary cases of nervous debility among the female staff may have been due to the strain of work, he has no specific case recorded of illness attributable to that cause, and as regards the staff generally he has stated spontaneously in his annual reports to the chief medical officer throughout the last ten years, that the various duties did not appear to have any detrimental effect on their health.

Bristol Telegraph Staff and the Efficiency Rate.

MR. SEDDON (Lancashire, Newton): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that at the Bristol office junior members of the staff, employed during the greater part of the year in the sorting office, have had their increments arrested for failing to pass the efficiency test required of a telegraphist regarding punching Wheatstone slip, although not yet at the efficiency bar; whether members of the staff who passed the efficiency test for their last increment have been compelled to undergo examination again before receiving their readjustment of wages under the Hobhouse scheme; and whether he can state the reason for this action at Bristol, seeing it has been taken in no other office in the country.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) I have received communications on both these subjects from the Postal Telegraph Clerks' Association.

Arming of the "Dreadnought."

MR. BELLAIRS (Lynn Regis): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether the Board intend to take steps to re-arm the "Dreadnought" for defence against the attacks of destroyers, in view of the fact that the only guns supplied to her for this purpose are inadequate, and the "Invincible" class and all succeeding "Dreadnoughts" have been given 4-inch guns instead of 12-pounders, as in the "Dreadnought."

(*Answered by Mr. Edmund Robertson.*) No, Sir. The 12-pounder gun is not considered an inadequate defence against torpedo attack.

Acting Overseer at Belfast Post Office.

MR. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): To ask the Postmaster-General why the practice adopted in former years of employing the senior sorting clerk and telegraphist as acting overseer is being departed from in the Belfast sorting office; and whether he is aware that this officer will be thereby deprived of the monetary advantage recommended by the Hobhouse Committee to an officer acting on a superior duty for two months.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) It is the general practice not to restrict employment on substitution to the senior officer of a class, but to take all reasonable opportunity for testing the qualifications of a number of those who are approaching the top of the class. No doubt this is what has occurred at Belfast, but I am ving inquiry made.

Sick and Annual Leave of Post Office Medical Officers.

MR. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he will state the amount of sick leave and annual leave, respectively, of each of the Post Office medical officers in London, male and female, during each of the last five years.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) I annex a statement showing the sick leave of the Post Office headquarters medical staff during the last five years, and the annual leave to which each medical officer is entitled. The third assistant medical officer and the resident medical officer have been omitted, as they have not yet been employed for a full year.

	Sick absence.					Annual leave allowed.
	1903.	1904.	1905.	1906.	1907.	
Chief medical officer -	Nil	Nil	Nil	3 days	Nil	5 to 6 weeks
Second medical officer	5 days	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	5 weeks
Female medical officer	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	5 weeks
Assistant female medical officer - - -	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	5 weeks
First assistant to medical officer - - -	Nil	3 days	Nil	Nil	Nil	4 to 5 weeks
Assistant to medical officer - - -	Nil	1 day	105 days	Nil	Nil	4 to 5 weeks

Salaries of Post Office Medical Officers.

MR. FIELD: To ask the Postmaster General, whether he will state the name, age, length of service, medical qualification, salary from Imperial funds, and emoluments from other sources, of each of the Post Office medical officers in London, male and female.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) There are over ninety medical officers in the London postal district in addition to the headquarters staff. The preparation of the Return asked for by the hon. Member would involve considerable labour, without, as it appears to me, leading to any very useful result.

Duties of Chief Clerk at Cork Post Office.

MR. A. ROCHE: To ask the Postmaster-General, if he will state what are the duties of the chief clerk of the Cork Post Office; has he any special reports showing that the present chief clerk has been mainly employed on special duties since his advent to office and his duties worked by an assistant superintendent; if so, will he create a vacancy for a first-class superintendent in addition to the existing position of chief clerk.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) Since the adoption of changes recommended by the Select Committee the chief clerk at Cork has been styled "superintendent." His regular duties are similar to those performed by officers of the same rank at other offices of equal importance, and in the ordinary course it has been necessary, since the early part of last year, to require him to devote a part of his time to the carrying out of changes in connection with the organisation and arrangements of the office. In accordance with the usual practice, some of his ordinary routine work has been delegated to the officer next in rank to him on the postal side. A revision of the indoor force is now in hand, and the question of the sufficiency or otherwise of the supervising staff will be duly considered.

Subsistence Allowance at Cork Post Office.

MR. A. ROCHE: To ask the Postmaster General whether a subsistence allowance is given to established officers on temporary relief duty; and, if so, will he explain why this subsistence allowance has been withheld from three juniors clerks in the Cork Post Office who were appointed to the establishment whilst on relief duty.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) It is the case that an allowance for subsistence is given to established officers when sent out for temporary duty at places other than their headquarters. The three officers referred to by the hon. Member were learners at Cork when they accepted the offer of temporary employment elsewhere, and for such employment they were paid the usual inclusive wages of 25s. a week. In each case their appointment to the establishment was made after their return to Cork, but was allowed to bear an earlier date in consideration of their long service as learner.

Overseers performing Operators work at Cork Post Office.

MR. A. ROCHE: To ask the Postmaster-General if the superintendent of telegraphs and some of the overseers in the Cork telegraphs are at present daily performing, for considerable periods, the work of ordinary telegraph operators, and, if so, will he consider the necessity of increasing the Cork telegraph staff, as the employment of these officials as operators is an economic loss to the Department.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) The hon. Member appears to have been misinformed. I am assured that it is not a fact that the superintendent of telegraphs and some of the overseers at Cork are at present daily performing, for considerable periods, the work of ordinary operators. Indeed, under normal conditions the present force of sorting clerks and telegraphists on the telegraph side at Cork is in excess of the requirements, and it is proposed to adjust it in connection with a revision now in hand. Of course, on exceptional occasions, it is not at all unusual for a supervising officer at any office to render temporary assistance at the instruments for a short time, provided that the proper supervision of the duties is not thereby interfered with, and this seems to have been the case at Cork.

Overtime for Mechanic at Manchester Post Office.

MR. BYLES (Salford, N.): To ask the Postmaster-General, if he is aware that the superintending engineer at Manchester is bringing a mechanic on duty one and a half hours earlier than the stated hour for commencing duty and refuses to pay overtime for the extra time worked; and will he give instructions that overtime be paid.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) The mechanic in question was brought on duty one hour before his usual time from the 20th to the 30th ultimo and released an hour before his usual time of departure; on the 31st ultimo and 1st instant, he was brought on duty an hour and a half before his usual time and released correspondingly early. His normal hours of duty were in no case exceeded, and the question of payment for overtime does not therefore arise.

Alleged Sweating in the Post Office.

MR. JOHN O'DONNELL (Mayo, S.): To ask the Postmaster-General whether at the inquiry into the grievances of Post Office officials in 1906, a distinct promise was made by the Secretary to the Post Office that all assistants employed at head offices and at sub-offices paid on the head-office system would be forthwith placed on the establishment; whether, considering these assistants have been and are still performing exactly similar duties to the established force, they are still obliged to work on Sundays without payment, and during sickness one-third of their pay is stopped, and a reduced rate of payment is made them for work performed on Bank Holidays and Christmas Day; if so, when will these officials be placed on the established force; whether their appointments will date from the time the promise was made, and whether an immediate stop will be put to the sweating or cheap labour system in the Post Office.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) The Question does not correctly represent the evidence to which it refers. The recommendations of the Select Committee in regard to assistants at head and salaried sub-offices, paragraphs 396–398 of their Report, will be fully carried out.

Licensing Compensation at Miskin Higher.

MR. D. A. THOMAS (Merthyr Tydvil): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the two alehouses in the division of Miskin Higher, in the County of Glamorgan, the renewal of whose licences was refused in 1906, and in respect to which the sum of £125 was paid in compensation to the licensees, were tied houses, and whether the balance of the total compensation of £1,300 went wholly to the owners of the properties; if he can state what compensation was paid in 1905 in respect to the refusal to renew licences in the divisions of Miskin Higher and Caerphilly Higher, and how much of the total went to the licensees and how much to other parties; and how many licences were refused in those divisions in 1907 for which compensation was paid.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) All the information available on the subject of this Question is given in the annual volumes of Licensing Statistics. I regret that I cannot give further details in regard to individual premises. The volumes show (1) that the two houses referred to in the first part of the Question were beerhouses, they were not "alehouses," *i.e.*, fully licensed premises; (2) that no licences were refused, subject to compensation, in the licensing districts of Miskin Higher and Caerphilly Higher in the year 1905; and (3) that in the year 1907, in these districts, four alehouses and twelve beerhouses were so refused, the compensation in respect of two and six of these houses, respectively, being paid before the end of the year.

Mines (Eight Hours) Bill.

MR. D. A. THOMAS: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will say on what date it is proposed that the Mines (Eight Hours) Bill should come into operation.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) I have decided to propose an amendment to the Bill relating to the date of its operation, so as to provide that in any event, no change shall be effected by it until after 30th June, 1909.

Increased Salaries in the Irish Agricultural Department.

MR. DELANY (Queen's County, Ossory): To ask the Vice-President of the Department of Agriculture (Ireland) whether he is aware that in the Agricultural Department during the coming financial year the expenditure will show an increase of approximately £5,000, applied towards raising the salaries of the higher officials; and whether he will give the names of the higher officials whose salaries are thus to be increased, with the amount of increase in each case, and also the names of the officials on whose recommendation the Department adopted these proposals.

(*Answered by Mr. T. W. Russell.*) The hon. Member is misinformed. The increase of £5,007 in the provision for salaries and wages in the Department's Estimate for 1908–9 includes: (1) the automatic increments of the salaries of officers of all grades who are on authorised scales of salary and are not at the maximum of the respective scales; (2) the additional charge required for the operation of the new scale for Second Division clerks throughout the Civil Service generally, sanctioned under Order in Council of 21st December, 1907; (3) the cost of additional necessary appointments. The number of special increases in the salaries of higher officials is six, and the amount is £584. These increases were recommended to the Treasury by myself on being satisfied of the merits of each case. The particulars are as follows:—Secretary, £200; Chief veterinary inspector, £100; two fisheries inspectors, £50 each on promotion; one technical instruction inspector, £155 on promotion from post of junior inspector to that of inspector of technical instruction. One agricultural inspector, £29 on promotion from post of junior inspector to that of agricultural inspector.

The Ameer of Afghanistan and the Anglo-Russian Convention.

MAJOR ANSTRUTHER-GRAY (St. Andrews Burghs): To ask the Secretary of State for India, whether His Majesty's Government has now received the views of the Ameer of Afghanistan with regard to the Anglo-Russian Convention of August 1907; and whether he has signified his assent to the Afghan clauses of that treaty.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Morley.*) The Answer is in the negative.

Kilpatrick Cemetery.

MR. DUNDAS WHITE (Dumbartonshire): To ask the Secretary for Scotland whether the Old Kilpatrick Parish Council has recently had to purchase land for a cemetery; and, if so, when was the purchase effected, what was the area of the land, what was the annual value of it as entered in the valuation roll, and what was the price which the parish council had to pay for it.

(*Answered by Mr. Sinclair.*) I am informed that the parish council resolved to make the purchase on 24th March. The area is 9½ acres. There is no entry in the valuation roll showing the value of this subject per acre, but it is believed to be about £2 5s. The price agreed upon was £460 per acre.

Licensing Compensation.

MR. W. T. WILSON (Lancashire, Westhoughton): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he can state the total amount of compensation paid for the licences that were extinguished in the years 1905, 1906, and 1907; the amount paid to licence holders who were also the tenants; the amount paid as compensation to the owners of tied houses; and the amount paid to the tenants of those houses, and to other parties interested in them.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) The annual volumes of Licensing Statistics (*see*, for instance, page 5 of the volume for 1907), show that a total sum of £2,301,583 4s. 10d. was paid in compensation for licences extinguished in the years 1905, 1906, and 1907, and that, of the money which was paid in the years 1906 and 1907, a total sum of £241,004 9s. 3d. went to licence holders, and £1,947,343 19s. 8d. to other parties interested. I am unable to give figures distinguishing between licence holders who were tenants and those who were not, or between "tied" and other houses.

MR. CLOUGH (Yorkshire, W.R., Skipton): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he can state how many licensed houses in the petty sessional divisions of East Staincliffe, West Staincliffe, Ewecross, and Bolton by Bowland, in the West Riding, have been closed under the Licensing Act, 1904; what amount was paid for compensation in respect of each house; what proportion of the money went to the owner of the house and to the tenant respectively; and what is the ratio of public-houses to population and the density of population in each of those areas.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) The annual volumes of Licensing Statistics show that no licences were refused subject to compensation in any of the districts named in 1905 or 1906. In 1907, five alehouse licences in the East Staincliffe district were so refused, and four were paid for and closed before the termination of the year, the total amount of compensation being £3,651, of which a total sum of £550, or 15·06 per cent., was paid to licensees, leaving £3,101 for other parties. I am unable to give figures for individual houses. In the Ewecross division in 1907 one alehouse licence was refused and paid for, the amount of compensation being £826, of which the licensee was awarded £82 12s., or 10 per cent. (Licensing Statistics, 1907, page 91). Pages 68 and 69 of the same volume show the numbers of on-licences on 1st January, 1907, and the population and acreage (according to the Census of 1901) in these petty sessional divisions, from which the following ratios result :—

	On-Licences per 10,000 of population.	Persons per acre.
East Staincliffe -	25·12	·28
West Staincliffe -	29·77	·09
Ewecross -	37·14	·09
Bolton - by - Bowland	50·04	·06

Clubs struck off the Register.

MR. CLOUGH : To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will issue forthwith a Return of all clubs where intoxicants were sold that have been struck off the register throughout England and Wales, under the provisions of the Licensing Act, 1902, and showing under which particular provisions of the Act they were struck off the register.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) The numbers of clubs struck off the register are shown for every licensing district in the Annual Volumes of Licensing Statistics, Table V., and are summarised in the Introduction. I do not possess the further information asked for in the Question, and, after making inquiry, I find that I could not now obtain the information necessary to make a complete or useful Return.

Condition of Courtown Harbour.

SIR THOMAS ESMONDE (Wexford, N.): To ask the Vice-President of the Department of Agriculture (Ireland) if his attention has been called to the present condition of Courtown Harbour; if the Department is aware of the state of that harbour, and of the nature of the improvements required there; and if he proposes to take any action in the matter.

(*Answered by Mr. T. W. Russell.*) The attention of the Department has been called to the present condition of Courtown Harbour. The maintenance of the harbour is vested in the county council. The Department assisted the county council on previous occasions in clearing away the bar which from time to time forms across the harbour mouth. Owing to the nature of the case all such assistance must be only of temporary utility. The Department cannot at present render immediate assistance at Courtown, as the steam crane which was formerly used there is engaged elsewhere, but they will communicate with the county council and see if any relief of the situation can be arranged for.

Importation of Carcases of Calves from Holland and Belgium.

MR. FIELD : To ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether he is aware that carcases of calves are imported from Holland and Belgium with the skins on; whether his experts consider it safe to allow this importation from a country where cattle disease exists; and whether he will make inquiries and regulations regarding it.

(*Answered by Sir Edward Strachey.*) The subject to which my hon. friend refers has been frequently under consideration, but it has not been thought necessary or practicable to place restrictions on the trade in dead meat. The carcases in question seldom, if ever, come in contact with animals, and no outbreak of disease has been circumstantially traced to them.

Exchequer and Audit Department Staff.

MR. FIELD : To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether the members of the old examiner class in the Exchequer and Audit Department at the time of the 1905 reorganisation were informed by the Comptroller and Auditor-General that facilities would be given them if they wished to retire, as they could expect to derive no benefit from the then contemplated reorganisation; if so, whether he will explain how the holding out of these facilities and of no prospects of advancement were in the interests of these officials; and whether he will further explain how this procedure can be reconciled with the subsequent promotion of two members of this class.

(*Answered by Mr. Runciman.*) I beg to refer the hon. Member to my replies of 24th June and 6th August last, to which I have nothing to add.

Mr. FIELD: To ask the Secretary to the Treasury why Messrs. Baker M'Kown, Hunt, Corbet, Adams, and Pool were recently passed over in making promotions in the Exchequer and Audit Department; and whether, having regard to the discontent caused in departments generally, and in this department in particular, since the appointment of the present Assistant Comptroller and Auditor, by the present system of selection in making promotions, he will endeavour to induce the Government to set up a special Court of Appeal to whom aggrieved Civil servants may refer their cases when they think heads of Departments have acted vindictively or unjustly towards them.

Mr. FIELD: To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether, seeing that Messrs. Knowles, Hurley, and Brown, of the Exchequer and Audit Department, were passed over for promotion on 1st November last, that their principal clerks admitted that they had not been consulted with reference to such promotions from 1st November, 1906, to 1st November, 1907, and that the comparative merits of members of any Department can be known only by the respective chiefs under whom they immediately serve, he will now cause an independent inquiry to be made into the subject of such promotions in the Exchequer and Audit Department.

Mr. FIELD: To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he will explain the system of promotion in the Exchequer and Audit Department under which Messrs. Reynolds, Day, Rainbott, Litten, Borthwick, Cope, Varian, Cato, and Smith have recently been passed over; and, seeing that the passing over of capable and efficient officers causes much unrest amongst these and other members of this Department and militates against its efficiency, and that a reference to the Comptroller and Auditor-General will merely produce a defence of his own action, will he cause independent inquiry to be made, with a view to the securing of an impartial judgment on the subject.

(*Answered by Mr. Runciman.*) For an Answer to these three Questions I must refer the hon. Member to my reply of 28th August last. To that reply I have nothing to add except to express my regret that the forms of the House should be used to cast an imputation, which I believe to be wholly unfounded, on an official of so high character and with so distinguished a record as the Assistant Comptroller and Auditor. I see no reason for the suggested inquiry.

Mr. FIELD: To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether the son of the Comptroller and Auditor-General's private secretary failed to pass the preliminary examination for the Second Division, which consisted of three subjects, handwriting, orthography, and simple arithmetic, the examiners being the Civil Service Commissioners; if so, will he say what were the subjects of the educational test this nominated gentleman passed on entering the old Colonial Audit Branch, and who were the examiners; and whether this gentleman has now the option of serving in the newly amalgamated Colonial Audit Branch and Exchequer and Audit Department on similar duties to those performed by his open-competition contemporaries, but with nearly twice the salary of any one of them.

(*Answered by Mr. Runciman.*) The suggestions in the Question are entirely without foundation.

Mr. FIELD: To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether, in reference to a request for investigation into the cases of men in the Exchequer and Audit Department who have been passed over for promotion, and which involved the mention of their names, he will say if any of these men have spontaneously come forward and expressed disapproval of this request for investigation; and, seeing that the future career of all the men passed over is largely in the hands of their principal clerks, and that the principal clerk of the Fifth Division of the Exchequer and Audit Department sent for certain of these men who work under him and asked them whether they disapproved of this request for investigation, will he say whether it is intended to attach any importance to any expression of disapproval obtained under such circumstances; and whether the

Comptroller and Auditor-General or the Assistant Comptroller and Auditor were aware of the action of the principal clerk referred to.

(*Answered by Mr. Runciman.*) The facts are misrepresented in the Question, but many of the officers mentioned have come forward and expressed their strong objection to the unauthorised use of their names by the hon. Member.

Mr. FIELD: To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether the present Assistant Comptroller and Auditor was appointed by the permanent officials of the Treasury; what positions did he occupy prior to his present appointment, and for what length of time did he hold each of such positions; and what were his qualifications for the post of Assistant Comptroller and Auditor.

(*Answered by Mr. Runciman.*) The Assistant Comptroller and Auditor-General was appointed by the Crown on the recommendation of the Prime Minister, and there is no foundation for the suggestion in the first part of the Question. I do not think that any useful purpose would be served by making inquiries on the other matters referred to by the hon. Member.

Mr. FIELD: To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether, seeing that the present Comptroller and Auditor-General on his appointment entered into a compact with the Treasury to retire at the age of sixty-five, he will state the age of this gentleman; and whether he intends to adhere to the terms of this compact.

Mr. FIELD: To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether, seeing that the present Comptroller and Auditor-General on his appointment entered into a compact with the Treasury to retire at the age of sixty-five, he will say if the terms of this compact further included the stipulation that he was to act as the nominal head of the Exchequer and Audit Department, and that the Assistant Comptroller and Auditor should be the actual head.

(*Answered by Mr. Runciman.*) I have nothing to add to the numerous replies already given on this subject.

Mr. FIELD: To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he will state the actual hours of attendance of the principal clerk of the Fifth Division in the Exchequer and Audit Department, his actual hours of attendance as secretary to the Royal Almoner, and the annual emoluments he receives for each of those two positions.

(*Answered by Mr. Runciman.*) This officer, like all other members of the Department, is required to give a daily attendance of seven hours. The scales of pay of principal clerks in the Exchequer and Audit Department are shown in the Parliamentary Estimates. I have no information as to the emoluments of the secretary of the Lord High Almoner, which are not provided out of voted moneys, nor as to the attendance required, which, as I have previously informed the hon. Member, is performed outside the regular office hours.

Auditing of Irish Public Accounts.

Mr. FIELD: To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether, seeing that the present system of auditing the Irish public accounts in London causes duplication of work and waste of public money, and that Ireland loses £10,000 per annum by having this Irish work done in London, he will further consider the advisability of having this Irish work done in Ireland.

(*Answered by Mr. Runciman.*) I have nothing to add to the previous replies which I have given on this question.

Wages of Government Workers in Dublin.

Mr. FIELD: To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether, seeing that, with reference to the Report of the Board of Trade on the subject of rents paid and the general cost of living in certain large towns in Great Britain and Ireland as they affect the working classes, the combined figures of rent and prices of commodities being taken as 100 in London, the figures for Dublin are ninety-four, or only 6 per cent. below London, he will say why the watchers in the

Dublin Customs have only 21s. a week, the Dublin park workers only 16s. a week, the A. O. D., Dublin, only 20s. a week, whilst the London Customs watchers get 24s. a week, the London park workers 24s. to 26s. a week, and the A. O D.., Woolwich, 23s. a week; and why the wages of Government workers in the London area are from 15 to 33 per cent. higher than those paid in Dublin.

(*Answered by Mr. Runciman.*) Having regard to the general level of wages in Dublin I think that the rates paid to the several classes of employees referred in the Question are adequate, and I cannot enter into a comparison with the rates paid in London.

Religious Education of Pauper Children.

Mr. W. BENN (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): To ask the President of the Local Government Board whether his attention has been directed to a case which recently came before the board of guardians of St. George's in the East, in which the father of three children admitted to the workhouse desired that they would be brought up in the Roman Catholic faith, that being the faith of their mother and that in which they themselves had been baptised; whether, because the father was described as Church of England on admission, the Local Government Board refused to permit the guardians to bring the children up as Roman Catholics; and whether the guardians would be able, under the Poor Law Amendment Act, 1868, to bring up the children in the faith the father desired.

(*Answered by Mr. John Burns.*) Section 17 of the Poor Law Amendment Act, 1868, requires in regard to any child in a workhouse under twelve years of age, that the master of the workhouse shall enter in the creed register as the religious creed of the child the religious creed of the father, if the master knows or can ascertain the same by reasonable inquiry. In the present case it appears that the father is a Protestant, and I presume he belongs to the Church of England. It would seem, therefore, that the entry in the creed register in respect of the religious creed of the children was correct. The attention of the Local Government Board was called to the case. They pointed out the effect of the section to which I have referred, but they did not refuse to permit the guardians to bring up the children as Roman Catholics, nor do they propose to interfere in the matter.

Public Health Act, 1907—Regulations.

Mr. FIELD: To ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he is in a position to say when the regulations in connection with the Public Health (Regulation of Foods) Act, 1907, will be published.

(*Answered by Mr. John Burns.*) The regulations are in an advanced state of preparation, and I hope they will shortly be issued.

Inspection of Imported Meat.

Mr. FIELD: To ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he is aware that the Glasgow veterinary surgeon is of opinion that all meat imported from over seas ought to be presented for examination in such form as would enable inspectors here to revise the previous work of inspection and thus form a fair idea as to the wholesomeness for human food, and that all boneless meat or scrap should be entirely excluded; and whether the Government will consider the advisability of appointing and paying such a staff of inspectors.

(*Answered by Mr. John Burns.*) My attention has been called to this Report. I propose that the regulations under the Public Health (Regulations as to Food) Act which I have in preparation should deal with imported boneless scrap meat. Other matters relating to the wholesomeness of imported meat are receiving my attention, but I do not think that inspection of the kind referred to in the last part of the Question would be practicable at the present time.

Drainage of the River Robe.

Mr. JOHN O'DONNELL: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that thousands of pounds worth of property has been annually destroyed on the land of the small farmers who live in the vicinity of the River Robe, in the Claremorris Union, county Mayo; whether petitions have been lodged with the Congested Districts Board asking that body to do something towards remedying the condition of affairs existing all over that district; and whether more than a year ago a promise was made by the Board to assist in the drainage of that river; and, if so, what is the reason they have failed to redeem their promise in a matter of urgency to numbers of poor people.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The Congested Districts Board have been urged to undertake drainage operations on the upper reaches of the River Robe for the benefit of the congested districts through which the river flows, including some of the Board's estates. About 11½ miles of the lower portion of the river is already under the control of local drainage trustees. In July, 1906, the Board made an offer to the Claremorris Rural District Council to contribute two-thirds of the estimated cost of £3,500, provided that a drainage board should be formed which would undertake to carry out the proposed works on the upper part of the river and be afterwards responsible for their proper maintenance. It would seem to be for the district council to consider whether they can comply with the conditions upon which the Board made their offer of assistance.

Sale of the Island Farm, Knox Estate.

MR. JOHN O'DONNELL: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that about three years ago the Island farm, consisting of about 400 acres of good land, on the Knox estates, near Ballyhaunis, county Mayo, was purchased by the Congested Districts Board; that this farm has since then been grazed and managed by the Board, and that the greatest desire exists on the part of the tenants in the neighbourhood to have this farm broken up, so that there may be an enlargement of the holdings on which they try to live suitably to their requirements, and that they have on many occasions asked the Board to carry out their wishes in this respect without result; and whether, in view of this treatment of these tenants, owing to the delay in the breaking up of this farm, he will have steps taken to have the places divided forthwith, so that each tenant might improve his portion in his own way and prevent further pain and disappointment to the tenantry.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The estate in question is for sale in the Land Judge's Court. The Congested Districts Board were negotiating for its purchase, but for reasons already fully stated they have been obliged to postpone making an offer in consequence of the state of their funds. The Board, therefore, are in the position of grazing tenants pending the sale to them of the estate. No steps for the division of the land can be taken until the sale to them has been effected.

Economic Holdings at Kilmaine.

MR. JOHN O'DONNELL: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, when the grazing farms in the parish of Kilmaine, Ballinrobe Union, and County of Mayo, are being divided, he will give instructions to the Congested Districts Board to see that the needs of the people of the parish will be properly attended to, with a view to creating a sufficient number of economic holdings to provide those who are now living on miserable patches with enough land to live on before applications from others will be granted.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The Congested Districts Board have postponed the distribution of the lands in their possession at Kilmaine until the Report of the Royal Commission on Congestion has been received and considered. Under the existing law the Board have no power to enlarge holdings over £5 valuation in non-congested districts.

Sale of the Begley Estate, Iskerlavally.

MR. JOHN O'DONNELL: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the landlord of the Begley estate, Iskerlavally, in the

Claremorris Union, offered the property for sale to the Congested Districts Board; whether the tenants have agreed to leave the matter in the hands of the Board; and, seeing that the estate is much congested, and that both parties have agreed to have the purchase carried out through that body, and that necessity for the relief of congestion exists on that estate, he will see that instructions to the Board's officials to proceed with the work will not be further withheld.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) For reasons which I have already fully stated to the House, the Congested Districts Board have been obliged to suspend negotiations for purchase in the case of this and other tenanted estates.

Labourers Act Inquiry at Mullingar.

SIR WALTER NUGENT (Westmeath, N.) To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can state why, at the recent Local Government inquiry held under the Labourers Act at Mullingar, five *bona fide* applicants for labourers' cottages on non-residential grazing land were rejected, the said land being situated in the townland of Rathnure and electoral division of Clonfad, and this nothwithstanding the fact that there is considerable tillage in the neighbourhood for which additional labourers are required.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The Local Government Board assume that the five cases alluded to in the Question are those in which applications were made for cottages on the property of Mr. C. B. Marlay in the townland of Rathnure. The inspector considered that the necessity for the proposed cottages was not established. The applicants were young single men, who were living with their parents, and for whom house accommodation did not appear to be particularly required.

Non-Production of Vouchers by the Rathmines and Rathgar Urban Council.

MR. JOHN O'CONNOR (Kildare, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that certain vouchers have been withheld from the ratepayers by the Rathmines and Rathgar Urban Council, contrary to the provisions of Article 27 of the Public Bodies Order, 1904; that ratepayers, viz., Messrs. O'Ratigan, Sullivan, and O'Driscoll, have complained to the Local Government Board on this matter with reference to the audit of the 31st March, 1907; and that the Local Government Board has failed to decide on the grievance as to the non-production of vouchers, and has failed to give any redress to the aggrieved ratepayers; and will the correspondence as to the non-production of vouchers at the audit of the Rathmines and Rathgar Urban Council's accounts for the year ended the 31st March, 1907, between the Local Government Board and the above ratepayers, between the said Board and the Rathmines Urban Council, and between the said Board and the auditor, Mr. John L. King, and all reports connected therewith, be laid upon the Table of the House.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) I am informed that all the vouchers which the auditor considered necessary for the purpose of the audit were produced to him. Complaint has been made to the Local Government Board that certain documents in the nature of subsidiary vouchers for the payment of expenses incurred in the promotion of local Bills by the urban council were withheld. These subsidiary vouchers were produced to the Taxing Master of the House of Commons, and the auditor did not demand their reproduction, as he did not consider them necessary for the purpose of the audit. The Local Government Board have no power to compel the production of these documents. As regards the concluding portion of the Question, the correspondence between the Local Government Board and the ratepayers mentioned is, of course, in the possession of these ratepayers, who are at liberty to publish it, and the correspondence between the Board and the urban council can be inspected by any local government elector under Article 19 (4) of the Application of Enactments Order, 1898. It would be contrary to practice to publish any communications which pass between the Board and any of their auditors. In the circumstances the reply to the last part of the Question must be in the negative.

Largy Schoolmaster.

MR. FETHERSTONHAUGH (Fermanagh, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, if he will state the result of the inquiries of the Commissioners of Education in Ireland into the connection between the teacher of Largy School, County Antrim, and the adjacent public-house; is the name of the publican also the name of the schoolmaster, and, if not in fact the same person, what relation is the publican to the schoolmaster; where does the publican reside, and who manages the public-house; and will he inquire as to these matters from the local police if the Commissioners are not aware of the facts.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The Commissioners of National Education inform me that, as the result of their inquiries, they have ascertained the following facts in connection with this case: the school is situate within a few yards of a public-house; the licensed publican is John Rainey, who is father of the teacher, William John Rainey; the licensed person does not reside on the premises but on his farm; the teacher's sister resides in the public-house and manages it; the teacher's wife and children reside in the public house when living in the locality, but it does not appear that the teacher himself lives there; he rents a room in a cottage in which he sleeps and takes his breakfast; he states that he is a teetotaller and has been so all his life. The Commissioners have taken measures to enforce a strict observance in future of the rule in this case.

Payment of Local Government Auditors.

MR. FIELD: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the auditors of the Local Government Board of England are paid by the local bodies for the work they do on a fixed scale of moderate charges; whether the auditors in Ireland have fixed salaries; whether he can state how the fees paid by local bodies are accounted for; whether in Scotland the Local Government Board appoints registered accountants for auditing; whether he will cause the practice in Ireland to be assimilated with that of either England or Scotland; and whether he will arrange that the Local Government Board auditors in Ireland shall confine themselves simply to the duty of auditing.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) Local Government Board auditors are paid by salary in England and Ireland alike, but the Irish scale of salaries is lower than the English. The audit fees paid by local bodies in Ireland are appropriated in aid of the Parliamentary Vote of the Local Government Board. In Scotland the Local Government Board appoints registered accountants for auditing. The practice in Ireland is similar to that which obtains in England, and is considered more suitable to the circumstance of Ireland than the Scottish practice Moreover, any change in this regard would require legislation. The duties of auditors in Ireland are prescribed by statute, and include reporting on the financial administration of the local authorities, as well as vouching the correctness of the accounts.

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).

Sir WILLIAM BRAMPTON GURDON reported from the Committee of Selection That they had discharged the following Members from Standing Committee B (in respect of the Children Bill): Mr. Solicitor-General, Mr. Whitbread, and, Mr. Mond; and had appointed in substitution (in respect of the Children Bill): Mr. Bramsdon, Mr. Fiennes, and, Mr. Percy Barlow.

Report to lie upon the Table.

ADJOURNMENT.

THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. GEORGE WHITELEY, Yorkshire, W.R., Pudsey), in moving that the House do now adjourn to 27th April, said that the first business after the recess would be the Second Reading of the Licensing Bill.

MR. SPEAKER: The Motion of the right hon. Gentleman is a little previous. As the House is aware, we are in expectation of a message to attend a Royal Commission in the House of Peers. On my return I will call on the right hon. Gentleman.

ROYAL ASSENT.

Message to attend the Lords Commissioners.

The House went; and, being returned;

Mr. SPEAKER reported the Royal Assent to—1. Army (Annual) Act, 1908. 2. Herne Bay Pier Act, 1908.

ADJOURNMENT.

MR. GEORGE WHITELEY then moved the adjournment of the House until 27th April.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn till Monday, 27th April."—(*Mr. George Whiteley.*)

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean) asked as to the ballot. He presumed that it was intended to have a ballot for notices of Motion on the day on which the House reassembled. His point was that there would only be one day's notice between that date and the first private Members' night.

MR. WALTER LONG (Dublin, S.): May I ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer—to whom I desire to offer the warmest possible congratulations upon his accession to that office, which I am sure he will fill with the utmost credit to the country and himself—if he can tell us a little more about the business than the information contained in the somewhat bald, and, so far as I know, quite unprecedented statement on the part of the Patronage Secretary in regard to business when the House meets again? I do not think there is any precedent for the House finding itself in the position in which we find ourselves. The whole circumstances of the case are exceptional. A programme of business had been arranged leading up to the adjournment, and it had been intimated in the usual way that following the adjournment the business would be, as it generally is, of a non-controversial character for the first few days pending the reassembling of Ministers. We are now met with the very simple statement of the Patronage Secretary—it is more of a fighting announcement than a statement of business—that the first business of the House will be the Licensing Bill. Does that mean that the Second Reading of the Licensing Bill will be taken *de die in diem* for the first week after we meet? Does it therefore mean that Thursday, which is usually given to Supply, will be devoted to the Licensing Bill, if necessary, and are we to have no information until after we reassemble in regard, first of all, to the introduction of the Budget—which is obviously a matter on which the House ought to have some information before it meets after Easter—and also in regard to the Second Reading of the Miners (Eight Hours) Bill? The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer will realise, I am sure, that the House ought not to separate without Members knowing more as to the arrangements for the business of the House, so that they may make their plans to be here on the days on which special business is to be taken.

MR. SPEAKER: In reply to the question of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Forest of Dean, I think the most convenient plan will be to take the ballot after Question time on Monday, and it will then be open for two or three days, so that Members who are successful can take their choice of days.

SIR GEORGE DOUGHTY (Great Grimsby): Can the right hon. Gentleman also say when the Education Bill will be taken?

MR. BURDETT-COUTTS (Westminster): As it has been announced that the Licensing Bill is to be the first measure taken after we meet on the 27th, may I ask the right hon. Gentleman who is now leading the House, and whom I, in an unofficial sense, beg heartily to congratulate on his promotion, whether it would not be advisable that we should have some statement as to the exact measure of the extensive modifications which we understand are to be made in the Licensing Bill?

MR. GEORGE WHITELEY: I am sorry the right hon. Gentleman should think my statement unduly bald. I limited my remarks when I first moved the adjournment, because I had nothing else to say, and I thought what I had said was sufficiently explanatory. The Licensing Bill will be taken on the Monday that we reassemble. I am quite aware it is rather unusual that a big Bill of that character should be taken, but the right hon. Gentleman must remember we have lost ten valuable days, and that if we do not press on with the important Bills, we shall find at the end of the session we have not achieved the legislation we desire to achieve. The division, we hope, may take place on the Wednesday night. Whether the Leader of the House will see fit to give Thursday or not I cannot say, but, as a rule, these are matters that are arranged between the Chief Whips of the Parties during the course of the Second Reading discussion of a Bill. If there were really a demand and a necessity for Thursday, I do not suppose the Premier would oppose it. With regard to the Miners' Eight Hours Bill no arrangement can be made beyond the first week. That statement necessarily applies also to the Education Bill and the Budget. The Government plans do not extend beyond the first week; but in all probability, as soon as possible after the first week, the Budget will be taken. With regard to modifications in the Licensing Bill, so far as I am concerned, there are none.

Mr. WALTER LONG: Has the right hon. Gentleman realised that Wednesday night is a private Members' night, and therefore the suggestion which comes from him as Chief Government Whip is that we should debate the main Bill of the session on the Monday and Tuesday and divide at eight o'clock on the Wednesday? Surely that can hardly be a serious proposition.

Mr. GEORGE WHITELEY: The right hon. Gentleman is a good hand at making a bargain, and it is not usual to give away, in the first instance, all one is perhaps prepared to give in the end.

Sir GEORGE DOUGHTY: Is there any truth in the report that the Education Bill is to be dropped?

Earl WINTERTON (Sussex, Horsham): Is the Housing Bill to be taken in the first fortnight after the recess?

Mr. GEORGE WHITELEY: We hope to take it as soon as we possibly can.

Earl WINTERTON: Will the right hon. Gentleman make an announcement on the Monday as to when these Bills will be taken?

Mr. GEORGE WHITELEY: An announcement will be made in the usual way on the Thursday.

Sir GILBERT PARKER (Gravesend) said he wished to put a question to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and at the same time to apologise to the right hon. Gentleman for having been unable to give him notice. During the last few weeks there had been a disturbance of industrial conditions, particularly in the county of Kent, one of the boroughs of which he had the honour of representing in that House. He referred to the hop industry. [Laughter.] Hon. and right hon. Gentlemen might consider that a laughing matter, but he represented a borough in a county the people of which looked on it as a very serious matter, and he was quite certain that the Chancellor of the Exchequer would not look upon it as either trivial or unimportant. [A voice: What is your question?] He presumed he had the privilege of putting his question in his own way. [Cries of "No speech."] He thought he was entitled to make a speech, and he proposed to do so. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had been used to dealing with emergencies, and no doubt, during his tenure of his new office, he would have to deal with a great many more. Let them consider the action he had taken, for instance, with regard to patents and to merchant shipping. That action had been absolutely independent of what might be called Party feelings or Party considerations. The right hon. Gentleman had looked at the interests of those engaged in the industries of the country from the standpoint of patriotism. He submitted that the question he was about to put to the right hon. Gentleman was one of grave importance. The Chancellor of the Exchequer and many of those who sat upon the Treasury Bench had again and again said that, in any case of undue competition—in any case of dumping which was clearly proved—the intervention of the Government could be made independently of legislation. That was said by the late Prime Minister and by the late Chancellor of the Exchequer, both of whom stated that it was in the power of the Government, in case of any undue disturbance of industrial conditions, to take action without legislation. He submitted to the House that in this case there was imminent danger of injury to the industry concerned. Hon. Gentlemen sitting below the gangway, when workmen were discharged from Woolwich recently, raised the question in the House as one of imminent danger; they moved the adjournment and asked the Government to intervene. Within the last three weeks there had been dumped down on the shores of the Thames something like 8,000 tons of hops to be sold at 25s. a cwt., which was something like 17s. per cwt. less than the cost at which the hops could be produced in the county of Kent. Had that price of 25s. been the normal price produced by the ordinary competition of business, he would not have been disposed to raise the question. [A voice: Are they new hops?] The 8,000 tons, which had been dumped down on British soil to compete with British hops, were the excess production of the United States, where they would bring a larger sum than in England. Did not the Chancellor of the Exchequer consider this a serious question? He believed there would be during the next fortnight something like 15,000 tons of hops dumped down upon our soil to compete with hops grown in the county of Kent. In the past the hop industry had been one of great importance. During late years it had declined, and the right hon. Gentleman should know that something like 8,000 families had been thrown out of employment by the grubbing of 23,000 acres under hop cultivation in Kent. Last year 1,700 acres of land which had been under hop cultivation were grubbed, and the consequent loss to British workingmen alone represented about £600,000. The dumping down of these 8,000 tons at the present time was making it impossible for those who grew hops in the county of Kent to make a living thereby. It was within the power of the right hon. Gentleman to deal with this serious situation and to put an end to the dumping down of these hops. It was in his power to prevent it. No doubt the right hon. Gentleman had followed very closely the inquiry going on upstairs into the condition of the hop industry, and if he had not read all the evidence he probably knew the general trend of it. He would know, too, that the hop growers in the county of Kent could not compete with the American growers if the latter were thus allowed to dump down here their surplus production. The right hon. Gentleman had to consider the whole subject. It was not a question of putting a permanent tax upon hops, though he believed there were among hon. Members sitting behind the right hon. Gentlemen some who advocated such a course when their own particular industry was touched. He understood that the hon. Gentleman who represented the Faversham division of Kent, in which hops were grown, strongly advocated a tax upon hops. He believed, too, that the hon. Member for Macclesfield, where silks were manufactured, also asked for a tax to be put upon silks. But he was not asking that in regard to hops. What he was asking was that the Chancellor of the Exchequer should deal with an abnormal situation. The right hon. Gentleman might ask how he was to do it. He would refer him to the speeches of his Leader the Prime Minister, and of his ex-Leader the late Prime Minister, both of whom had said in that House that if a case of dumping occurred it was not necessary to ask Parliament for any legislation, but that it could be dealt with through the Treasury itself without legislation. Possibly the right hon. Gentleman had not found it possible as yet to avail himself of the information possessed by his predecessors in office, but he submitted to him that what he was asking was founded upon principles which they who held views as strongly as he and his friends did on tariff reform had every right to urge upon him. If the right hon. Gentleman could not take action in such a case of excessive dumping, what did his leaders mean when they said that in such cases of special injury to British industry the Treasury could intervene without having to ask the assent of Parliament? Would the right hon. Gentleman seriously consider the situation? If workmen were thrown out of work—whether they were hop growers or Woolwich artisans, it was all the same thing—if they were thrown out of work by unfair and undue competition, had the Government no answer, and had the Chancellor of the Exchequer in his hands no remedy whatever to enable him to deal with such a situation? The present situation was abnormal, but if this dumping of hops was to be persisted in it would become normal, and it would mean the steady and absolute destruction of hop production in this country, and the expatriation of the people now employed in the production of the hops, or else their absorption in that vast army of unemployed on which the Government were prepared to expend large sums of money every year. He put it to the Chancellor of the Exchequer that he could not possibly begin his career as a Minister at the head of a great office concerned with the industrial interests of the country better than by dealing with such a situation as this, and he asked him for a frank and direct answer, such as he was accustomed to give when President of the Board of Trade, as to whether he intended to act upon the professed policy of the Government in the past, a policy which he had no reason to believe had been changed.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE, Carnarvon Boroughs): I am not sure that I am entitled to speak as Chancellor of the Exchequer at this moment; I am only Chancellor-designate. I thank the right hon. Gentleman and the House for the very kind way in which they have received me. I agree with the hon. Member for Gravesend that this is a very important matter. I should be the last man in the world to minimise anything which affects British industry. I should have thought it important enough for me to have notice of it. It is very difficult for me, on a highly technical matter of this sort, to give——

SIR GILBERT PARKER: I will only say I was ignorant of the fact that the right hon. Gentleman would be here to-day. I thought he would have to go to his constituency, or I should certainly have given him notice.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: At the present moment I have not taken up my quarters at the Treasury, and I have only followed this matter in a general way, though with great interest. I agree that it is a matter of considerable importance, but I do not think anything is to be gained by exaggerating it. For instance, the hon. Gentleman has talked as if this were purely a sudden emergency, and the hop industry which had been prosperous hitherto had been damaged by a sudden inrush of foreign hops. That is not in accordance with the facts. If the hon. Member had taken the trouble to look at the facts he would have known that compared with thirty years ago we have imported less foreign hops. There has been a steady decline in each decade in the quantity of hops imported from abroad. There are two things which have really affected the hop trade. The first is machinery. We are producing the same quantity of hops out of a smaller acreage. That has nothing to do with the trade conditions, but has a good deal to do with improvement in the methods of production. In itself it is a good thing, but, unfortunately, you cannot have good things without occasionally bringing some sort of disadvantage on others who are not benefited by them. The result is a good saving of labour, and those who are engaged in the hop industry have suffered to that extent. This change is not attributable to the importation of foreign hops, which has declined; it is entirely attributable, first, to machinery and improved methods of production, and, secondly, to the use of hop substitutes. Instead of asking the Chancellor of the Exchequer to introduce some sort of legislation the nature of which the hon. Gentleman himself cannot quite indicate to me, why should he not go to his friends the brewers—they are great patriots; in fact we might suppose from the sort of language used recently they are the only patriots—and say, "Here are you, a great patriotic trade; why are you using all this foreign stuff, some of it, I understand, consisting of rather deleterious ingredients, instead of the good old British article, hops?" Hops produce better beer, clearer beer—I do not pretend to be an authority, but I am told that that is the case. Why not appeal to them? I think the hon. Gentleman will agree with me that it is a mistake to have legislation, unless it is absolutely necessary, to interfere with an industry. If you got a trade like that to use the real British article instead of resorting to this adulterated, deleterious, mischevious, pernicious foreign stuff, the situation would be saved. That is the suggestion I make to the hon. Gentleman; he has greater influence with that community than I have. If the great brewing syndicates were induced to use hops grown in Kent instead of hops grown in California, and other stuff grown in all parts of the world, I think the hop industry in Kent would have much more reason to thank the hon. Gentleman than it will for making vague and wild suggestions, which he himself has really not outlined, and which would not be effective if they were put into operation. I do not wish to dogmatise. A very able Committee, presided over by one of the ablest men in the House, is at present inquiring into this industry. It has been sitting seven days, and has taken evidence from the leading hop-growers. It is to have evidence, too, from the brewers, and it is pursuing its inquiry with every expedition. It is not for me to indicate the nature of that inquiry, but it is too early to have a discussion on the subject. The hon. Gentleman is entirely wrong in suggesting that there is some abnormal dumping of foreign hops. When he talks about 8,000 tons he is absolutely wrong. He has mistaken tons for hundredweights.

SIR GILBERT PARKER: I suppose the right hon. Gentleman does not wish to misrepresent me. I said 8,000 tons, and I mean 8,000 tons.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: The hon. Gentleman is accustomed to tariff reform statistics.

SIR GILBERT PARKER: I do appeal to the right hon. Gentleman.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: The hon. Gentleman has only himself to blame for my not having the actual figures. If he had given me even three hours' notice I could have given him the figures. I am informed generally that 8,000 tons is an exaggeration. The total number of tons last year was 10,000, and that seems to represent on the whole the quantity which has been steadily coming in for years. During the twenty years of the Unionist Government this was going on, and every member for the county of Kent was a supporter of that Government. They never thought it necessary to interfere; and surely when we have been in power only two years we might at any rate be given some time to inquire into the matter. I am not sure that we are the only Government who have really inquired into the matter. I think it is a wise course not to legislate without inquiring first. It is much better than legislating first and making investigations afterwards. If the hon. Gentleman does not mind our looking into the matter and getting our facts and information first, I think that will be our wiser course.

MR. FORSTER (Kent, Sevenoaks) did not think the right hon. Gentleman, who was no doubt in a state of suspended animation realised the urgency of the case and the real grounds of the apprehensions that existed in the hop-growing districts. The dumping of American hops was part of a settled policy declared by the hop growers on the western coast of America, to make it impossible for hops to be grown in Great Britain. It was part of a policy to make the British market a happy hunting ground for the American hop grower. That was the new fact in the situation which the right hon. Gentleman seemed to have left out of account. He hoped he would include it in the scope of his inquiry. The result, he was confident, would be to force him to the conclusion that some steps must be taken unless hop growing was to come to an end as a British industry. The right hon. Gentleman asked why an attempt was not made to persuade brewers to give up using hop substitutes. Why did not the right hon. Gentleman tax the substitutes?

MR. J. MACVEAGH (Down, S.): Our beer would cost us more.

MR. FORSTER said that that was a prospect which some hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite would view with unconcern. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would realise the urgency of this matter.

MR. PIKE PEASE (Darlington) said the Chancellor of the Exchequer had tried to make a party point with reference to tariff reform statistics. It was quite possible that tariff reform statistics like everything else might sometimes be incorrect. The other night the right hon. Gentleman himself gave some remarkable figures with regard to the unemployed of Germany, his figures including some women and some partly employed people. When he (Mr. Pike Pease) put a Question in the House on the subject three or four days afterwards, the right hon. Gentleman accepted his correction. Under the circumstances he need not have referred to tariff reform figures. With regard to the question of hops the right hon. Gentleman had said that thirty years ago there was a great number of imports into this country. That was perfectly true, but when they were considering the question of exports and imports he should take into account the question of population and the total amount of exports and imports. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would really consider the question, as one of infinite importance to a very large number of the population of the country and one in which the House took great interest.

MR. GRETTON (Rutland) said the right hon. Gentleman had inadvertently made one or two statements which were not in accordance with facts, at any rate, as they had been put before the Hops Committee, of which he was a member. It had been given in evidence that in brewing only a small proportion of hop substitutes was used. The relative importance of this question of substitutes should be laid clearly before the House. The official returns showed that something like 571,000 cwts. of hops were used in brewing last year, and only 246 cwts. of hop substitutes. Personally he would be quite willing to see them entirely abolished. The importation complained of was an abnormal consignment of Californian hops two years old. It already amounted to about 5,000 tons, and a further consignment of about 3,000 tons was expected. It was in regard to that exceptional importation that the hon. Member for Gravesend had appealed to the Chancellor of the Exchequer to come to the help of the hop industry in Kent, which was undoubtedly in a very deplorable condition. The inquiry of the Committee was not complete. As far as he was concerned, he was strongly of opinion that when the season was good there were no better hops than English hops, but unfortunately the seasons were not always good. The House was not yet in a position to judge how far foreign hops were necessary. He strongly supported the appeal that had been made in regard to the special importation, which threatened grave injury to the hop industry during the coming season.

*SIR W. J. COLLINS (St. Pancras, W.) said the Select Committee on the Hop Industry, of which he was chairman, was only appointed four weeks ago, and it had addressed itself to its rather wide reference with considerable expedition and industry, having sat sometimes twice a week, and for five or six hours at a stretch. Its terms of reference included the whole subject of the past and present condition of the hop industry. There had been no inquiry on the subject for seventeen years, and a great deal of valuable evidence had accumulated. The Committee would be able to report to the House precise figures as to the acreage formerly under hops and the extent to which that acreage had been reduced in Kent and Sussex. Figures would also be given in respect of Herefordshire and Worcestershire. The growers had presented their case in a fair and satisfactory manner, and after the recess evidence would be given on behalf of the brewers, the hon. Member for Rutland having suggested certain witnesses who would be able to give valuable evidence. The whole question of foreign imports was also engaging the attention of the Committee, and precise figures would be given of imports not only from the Atlantic Coast, but also from the Pacific Coast. There was no intention to delay the inquiry, and the Committee was anxious to make it as complete and satisfactory as possible in order that legislation, if necessary, might follow full investigation.

MR. HAROLD COX (Preston) said he had lived all his life in the centre of a hop-growing district, and to his knowledge there had always been an outcry in the hop country against foreign hops. He could go back for a period of thirty years and he remembered that Lord Salisbury told the hop growers of Kent that they could not expect a tax on their particular product unless they were willing to concede a tax upon other people's products; and he asked them whether there was any likelihood that the people of this country would consent to a tax on bread to please the growers of corn. Hitherto the Party opposite had declared that they would never tax raw material. Did the hon. Gentleman opposite adhere to that position?

SIR GILBERT PARKER said he did not ask for a general tax on hops. He asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer to deal with an abnormal situation in accordance with his promise that if a case of excessive dumping was shown he could deal with it under our present fiscal system.

MR. HAROLD COX said that for more than thirty years the Kentish farmers had been asking for a tax on hops in order to raise the price. Tariff reformers told them they did not desire that the price should be raised; they only wanted the foreigner to pay the tax. Yet recently a meeting of Kentish farmers passed a resolution declaring that a 40s. duty was required in order to raise the price of hops by 40s. It was complained that the Americans were sending their surplus production. Of course they were, and one of the secrets of business was to sell what one did not one's self require.

SIR GEORGE DOUGHTY: If you reduce the price of hops can you ensure a reduction in the price of beer?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member has exhausted his right of speaking.

MR. HAROLD COX, continuing, said that what the hon. Member proposed was to put a tax on raw material in order to raise the price. Now they had a clear definition of what was meant by tariff reform. It did not mean taxing manufactured articles, or taxing the foreigner, but it meant raising the price of raw materials, and raising the price to the home consumer.

MR. FELL (Great Yarmouth) suggested to the Chancellor of the Exchequer that he had power to prevent the passing through the Custom House of this abnormal shipment of foreign hops, which were two years old and were to be sold at a knock-out price. In view of their age, it might be that they contained the germs of disease and were not fit to be sold on the market. Let the right hon. Gentleman place an embargo on them until it had been ascertained whether they contained any deleterious matter, or whether they were really fit for consumption. He thought that the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in such an abnormal case, might take some steps to put an embargo on hops which were proved to be unfit for consumption. Until the Select Committee had made its report, and the matter had been thoroughly looked into, he hoped that the right hon. Gentleman would cause some steps to be taken to prevent hops being brought here until it was ascertained that they were thoroughly fit to be introduced into the country.

MR. ANNAN BRYCE (Inverness Burghs) said he wished to ask the Leader of the House if in arranging the business he would include an Education Bill for

Scotland. He might remind the right hon. Gentleman that they had already had six Education Bills introduced by two Governments during the last seven years, and it would be a source of great disappointment in Scotland if an Education Bill for Scotland were not carried this session.

MR. JOWETT (Bradford, W.) said he would like to put before the Chancellor of the Exchequer the consideration of a matter in connection with hops, having relation to the changes which had taken place in regard to home brewing. Brewing, in consequence of the changes, had been driven into the hands of brewing syndicates. About 1880, when Parliament took the tax off barley and placed taxation on liquor, the result was practically to cut off the old custom of brewing at home which used to prevail in a large part of the country. He asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he would see that the Committee which had this subject under consideration inquired into the advisability of reverting to the old system of encouraging harmless brewing of beer at home, instead of patronising the substitutes and chemicals used by the brewers of the country. He also asked the right hon. Gentleman what he proposed to do with regard to a far more important subject—that of unemployment. It would be within the recollection of Members that a proposal made from those benches for the Second Reading of a Bill on the subject of unemployment was rejected by the House. That might be right or wrong. Personally, he thought the Bill was sound, for he could not get over the feeling that it was the duty of the State and of the community to see to the interests of the unemployed so long as they were willing to work. He therefore contended that it was the duty of the Administration to say what they intended to do in the matter. It was exceedingly difficult under the forms of the House to get a discussion on any subject. Private Members were almost wiped "off the mat" so to speak. There could be no more important subject than the unemployment problem. Doubtless the right hon. Gentleman would answer that there were various reforms which might have some influence with the question. Hon. Members above the gangway believed that certain charges in the matter of the importation of foreign hops might have some influence; some hon. Members on the other side of the House believed that the taxation of land values might have some effect on unemployment, and others believed that in the years to come, how many years they could not tell, the Small Holdings Act, passed last year, might have some influence also. But all these things were in the dim and distant future, while unemployment was present with us. Men were without work, and were wanting it, and since private Members had no responsibilities in the House under the present system of national administration, and since Ministers only were responsible for their own Departments, he asked them to exercise that responsibility, and say that day what they intended to do about unemployment. It was a most pressing question, and he thought he was within his rights in respectfully demanding a reply from the right hon Gentleman as to what was intended to be done.

MR. CLEMENT EDWARDS (Denbigh, District) said he represented a constituency where a very large number of electors were engaged as workmen in breweries. On the occasion of the last election the Tariff Reform League carried on an agitation among them, and one of their representatives was asked whether the League were prepared to run the risk of injuring the brewing trade by putting a tax on the raw material—hops. The very emphatic reply was given by the representative of the Tariff Reform League that they were prepared to do nothing of the kind. He was sure that if that kind of representation had not been made his majority at the election would have been even greater than it was. They had that distinct reply from a representative of the League, which, it had been said, could not blow both hot and cold; but if their policy with regard to raw material had changed, he would ask as a personal favour that the League should send a representative into his constituency to explain that fact. He protested most emphatically against the proposal to increase the number of unemployed by putting a tax upon the raw material called hops. Doubtless they would hear, in connection with another Bill which was to be discussed immediately after the holidays, a great deal about throwing persons out of employment in connection with the brewery trade; but he ventured to say that the number thrown out would be the merest fraction compared with the number that would be unemployed if the ideas of the hop farmers were realised, and a tax were put upon the raw material of the brewing trade.

CAPTAIN CLIVE (Herefordshire, Ross) said that hon. Members had not attempted to define what they called raw material, and he thought the House would readily agree that there could be no hard and fast line drawn. He was prepared to say about hops, whether they were raw material or not, that very much more money went in labour with hops before they reached the brewer than after they became the raw material of manufacture. It had been pointed out by both the present and the late Prime Minister that under present legislation it was perfectly possible to deal with special cases of dumping as they arose. The Chancellor of the Exchequer in his reply to his hon. friend had made no reference to that point whatever. His hon. friend had taken particular care not to dictate what should be the remedy adopted; he had simply pointed out that both the present and the late Leader of the House had declared their ability to deal with special cases as they arose; and he had asked the right hon. Gentleman to put the existing powers in force. He was not sure whether under the rules of the House the Chancellor of the Exchequer could speak again, but it would be interesting to know how the Government would be prepared to deal with such cases as the one in question. The frequent statements they had made of their ability to deal with them had constituted one of the commonest arguments, at any rate, against the urgency of the introduction of tariff reform.

MR. VERNEY (Buckinghamshire, N.) said he would remind hon. Gentlemen opposite that this was not the first ship that had approached the English shores with hops: many and many another ship had come. The hon. Member and his friends asked that the Government should exercise their powers—powers which had never been defined or explained by them. He had been listening in vain for some definition. What hon. Members really asked for was drastic legislation, not to meet this particular case, but to put a duty of 40s. on hops to last from now until Doomsday. He had asked every witness who had come before the Select Committee on the Hop Industry whether the 40s. duty which had been alluded to time after time by witness after witness was to meet this particular case; and all those who had had the greatest experience had answered "No." What they meant was a 40s. duty on hops, and that the duty was to last as long as the hop industry continued. That was the evidence put before the Committee. This question had arisen before and had been argued out time after time as being a permanent duty on hops. He hoped the House would not be under the impression that anything else had been asked for from the Committee, because that and that only was the demand made by witness after witness.

MR. CLYNES (Manchester, N.E.) said he had put down a Question to the Home Secretary respecting the imprisonment of a number of leaders of the unemployed in Manchester. He asked if the right hon. Gentleman would ask for a report in regard to the circumstances of the imprisonment of these men, and whether he would take any action with a view to reducing what was deemed by the Labour Party to be a very extreme sentence. Perhaps the Under-Secretary could say whether any report had been received, and if so, whether any action in the direction the Labour Party wished was contemplated.

THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. HERBERT SAMUEL, Yorkshire, Cleveland): The hon. Member did not give me any notice of the Question and I am afraid therefore that I cannot give him any definite reply, but I will make immediate inquiry to see whether any action is possible.

MR. CROOKS (Woolwich) said the desire of the Labour Party was that the House should rise to a sense of its own responsibility. They were constantly told that inquiries would be made, and in that way the whole thing drifted on from year to year with occasionally a little sop to keep men quiet. Imprisonment could have no terrors to men or women who lived a life which, under present conditions, was almost a hell to them. Imprisonment would not terrorise people into obeying the law when the State permitted them to exist in a far worse state outside prison than inside. The Under-Secretary had promised them further inquiry and sympathy. There was nothing in the world so cheap as sympathy. They were constantly being told that the House of Commons could do nothing and that it was a deliberative Assembly. They had had a good example of that that day, because they had been deliberating for some considerable time on nothing in particular. They were not punishing these men but rather relieving them for a time by putting them in prison. It behoved those representing the Government to look round to see if the existing state of things could not be relieved. They had some hopes that the new Chancellor of the Exchequer with his deep sympathy and brilliant intellect would be able to help them. In this matter in the past it had been found necessary to cajole, flatter, or abuse the Government in order to encourage them to do something. If they called attention to the fact that a poor woman by the neglect of some official in an institution had been put into a bath and boiled, the hon. Member would simply get up and say, "I can assure the hon. Member that boiled lunatics are not in my Department." He appealed to hon. Members during the next ten days to consider what could be done for the surplus population. They must be absorbed in some kind of useful work and it was the duty of the Government to do something to find them employment. This sending of the unemployed to prison was a very serious thing, not only for those who were imprisoned but for those outside, because prison had no terrors for them. He hoped the Home Secretary would be able to send a message of peace to those poor men who had been imprisoned at Manchester after being found guilty of what? Simply of trying to get their daily bread honestly.

MR. WILLIAM ABRAHAM (Glamorganshire, Rhondda) asked when the Miners (Eight Hours) Bill would be proceeded with. He had been appealing to the House for the last twenty years upon this question. Only a few weeks ago a distinct promise was made that the Bill would be introduced before the Easter holidays. He knew that certain things had happened which were in no way under the control of the Government, and no body of men sympathised more with the ex-Premier than the miners. There was a rumour that the Miners (Eight Hours) Bill was going to be dropped. He knew that the Government had sufficient trouble without dropping the Miners Bill, and he hoped that course would not be dreamed of, because the consequences would be very serious indeed.

Question put, and agreed to.

House adjourned at twenty-five minutes past Four till Monday, 27th April.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Monday, 27th April, 1908.

The House met at a quarter before Three of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Draycott Gas Bill; Gosport Gas Bill; Humber Commercial Railway and Dock Bill; Leeds Corporation Bill; Leicester Corporation Bill; Motherwell Burgh Extension, &c., Bill.—Read the third time, and passed.

North Eastern Railway Bill (King's Consent signified).—Bill read the third time, and passed.

Wishaw Burgh Electricity, &c., Bill.—Read the third time, and passed.

Dundalk Urban District Council Bill.—As amended, considered; to be read the third time.

Audenshaw Urban District Council Bill [Lords]; Camberwell and other Metropolitan Borough Councils (Superannuation) Bill [Lords]; Fishguard and Rosslare Railways and Harbours Bill [Lords]; Merthyr Tydfil Corporation Bill [Lords].—Read a second time, and committed.

Pontypridd Water Bill [Lords].—Read a second time, and committed.

Briton Ferry Urban District Council Bill [Lords] (by Order).—Read a second time, and committed.

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill.—"To confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to Bath, Little Lever, Stanhope, Stratford-on-Avon (Rural), Stratton and Bude, and the Hemel Hempstead Joint Hospital District," presented by Dr. Macnamara; supported by Mr. Burns; read the first time; to be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 193.]

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill.—"To confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to Bridlington, Fulwood, Romford, and Weymouth and Melcombe Regis," presented by Dr. Macnamara; supported by Mr. Burns; read the first time; to be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 194.]

Edinburgh Corporation (Tramways, &c.) Order Confirmation Bill.—"To confirm a Provisional Order under The Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, relating to Edinburgh Corporation Tramways, &c.," presented by Mr. Sinclair; read the first time; and ordered (under Section 9 of the Act) to be read a second time upon Tuesday, 5th May, and to be printed. [Bill 195.]

PETITIONS.

COAL MINES (EIGHT HOURS) (No. 2) BILL.

Petitions in favour: From Algernon Pit; Ashton Moss; Ashton's Green; Brackley Colliery; Cadrow; Cambois; Clyde Colliery; Coal Pit Heath (Gloucester); Collins Green; Dykeford Colliery; Ferniegair Colliery; Forley Colliery, Tollcross; Hartshead Branch, York; Hepscott Colliery; Gateside; Gwendraeth Colliery; Kirkintilloch; Lea Green; Linby; Netherton Hall; Netherton Howard; New Cwmmaur Colliery; Newton; North Elswick; Pentremaur Colliery; Preston Colliery; Ross; Sleekburn; South Elswick; Sutton Heath; Wishaw; and Wyke; to lie upon the Table.

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL.

Petitions in favour: From Torquay; and Warminster; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSING BILL.

Petitions against: From Ash; Beaconsfield; Bridlington; Carmarthen; Crewkerne; Driffield; East Horsley; Helperthorpe; High Wycombe; Isle of Thanet; Marlow (two); Princes Risborough; Rotherham (two); Salisbury; Thrapston; Wallingford; Weaverthorpe; Wells;

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

West Wiltshire; Whiston; and Wold Newton; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSING BILL.

Petitions for alteration: From Beeston; and Bradford (Yorks); to lie upon the Table.

LICENSING BILL.

Petitions in favour: From Abbeydale; Abergwili; Alvaston; Arnold; Ashton-under-Lyne (five); Ash Vale; Auchencairn; Barking; Barrington; Barrow-on-Soar; Battlefield; Bearsden; Bedford (three); Beeston; Birkdale (two); Blackpool (four); Blyth (two); Bodwrog; Bonhill; Bonkle; Bovey Tracey; Bradford; Bradford-on-Avon; Bridlington (two); Brockley; Broadstairs; Bryndu; Brynsiencynr; Cambois (three); Castle Donington; Charlesworth; Cheddar Valley; Chelsea; Chisworth; Clevelys; Clydebank; Coalville; Coatdyke; Combe Martin; Convil Elvet (two); Cowgate; Crosshill; Crouch Hill (two); Dalbeattie; Dalmuir; Dartmouth (two); Dawlish; Delting; Derby; Derbyshire; Devonport; East Ham; Edinburgh (eight); Falkirk (four); Ferry; Filey; Firth; Fishguard; Glasgow (five); Glencairn; Glenelg; Gomersal (two); Great Yarmouth (two); Greenwich; Hackney; Hamilton; Harrow Road; Heckmondwike; Helensburgh (two); Highbridge; Holloway Road; Holm; Holyhead; Huddersfield; Iver; Kentish Town; Kingswood; Kirkham; Kirkintillock (four); Lanark; Lancaster (ten); Langholm (three); Leicester (three); Lerwick; Linlithgow and Falkirk; Llanarthney; Llanybyther; Lochend and New Abbey; London (two); Loughborough; Maidenhead (two); Manor Park (two); Marsden; Melbourne; Melksham (two); Melton Mowbray (two); Milford; Morecambe; Morpeth; New Barnet; Newborough; Newbridge; Newcastle Emlyn; Newcastle-upon-Tyne (two); Newnham; North Ronaldshay (four); North Shields; Nottingham (six); Penrhoslligwy; Pollokshaws; Pontyberem (four); Poulton le Fylde; Renton (three); St. Annes on Sea (two); St. Clears; St. Helens (three); St. James; Salford (four); Seer Green; Sheffield; Shepshed; Shire Moor; Skye; Tongue; Torquay (four); Trowbridge; Uphill; Vale of Leven; Valley; Velmgwin; Warminster; Waterside; West Bridgford; Woking (three); Woodbridge; and Wroxall; to lie upon the Table.

LIQUOR TRAFFIC (LOCAL OPTION) (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petitions in favour: From Alexandria; Cadzow Oak; Cathcart; Falkirk; Glasgow; Kingussie; and Linlithgow and Falkirk; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY BILL.

Petitions in favour: From Brixham; Deptford; and East London; to lie upon the Table.

PARLIAMENTARY PAPERS (RECESS).

The following Papers, presented by Command of His Majesty during the Easter Recess, were delivered to the Librarian of the House of Commons during the Recess, pursuant to the Standing Order of 14th August, 1896:—

Army (Militia Units).—Copy of Return showing the Establishment of each Unit of Militia in the United Kingdom and the numbers present, absent, and wanting to complete, at the Training of 1907.

Cancer Research (Colonies).—Copy of further Correspondence relating to the Cancer Research Scheme.

Education (Scotland).—Copy of Regulations as to Grants to Secondary Schools in Scotland, 1908.

Irish Universities Bill, 1908.—Copy of Preliminary Draft of the Articles of a Charter for the University to have its seat in Belfast.

Irish Universities Bill, 1908.—Copy of Preliminary Draft of the Articles of a Charter for the University to have its seat in Dublin.

Mines and Quarries.—Copy of Reports of His Majesty's Inspectors of Mines to the Secretary of State for the Home

Department under the Coal Mines Regulation Acts, 1887 to 1896, the Metalliferous Mines Regulation Acts, 1872 and 1875, and the Quarries Act, 1894, for the year 1907.

Cyprus.—Copy of Correspondence relating to the affairs of Cyprus.

Irish Land Commission (Proceedings).—Copy of Return of Proceedings of the Irish Land Commission during the month of December, 1907.

Prisons (Scotland).—Copy of Thirtieth Annual Report of the Prison Commissioners for Scotland, being the Sixty-ninth Annual Report on Prisons in Scotland, 1907.

Treaty Series (No. 10, 1908).—Copy of Agreement between the United Kingdom and France respecting Death Duties, signed at London, 15th November, 1907. Ratifications exchanged at London, 9th December, 1907.

Trade Report (Annual Series).—Copies of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 3972–3974, and 3977.

Miscellaneous, No. 3 (1908).—Copy of Correspondence with His Majesty's Ambassador at Berlin respecting a Declaration by the Governments of Great Britain, Denmark, France, Germany, the Netherlands, and Sweden on the subject of the maintenance of the *status quo* in the territories bordering upon the North Sea.

Ordered, That the said Papers do lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1887 (EVICTION NOTICES).

Copy presented, of Return of Eviction Notices filed during the quarter ended 31st March, 1908 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

INTERMEDIATE EDUCATION (IRELAND).

Copy presented, of Report of the Intermediate Education Board for Ireland for the year 1907 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table:—Manual of Procedure in the Public Business of the House of Commons, 1908 [2nd edition].

NEW WRIT.

New Writ for the Borough of Wolverhampton (East Division), in the room of the right hon. Sir Henry Hartley Fowler, G.C.S.I. (Chiltern Hundreds).—(*Mr. Whiteley.*)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Imprisonment at St. Petersburg of Mr. Tchayskovsky.

MR. YOXALL (Nottingham, W.): To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, whether he can take any action in the case of Nicholas Tchayskovsky, a distinguished man of science of Russian birth (but resident in this country for more than twenty years, and several of whose family are British subjects), confined since 24th November, 1907, in the fortress of St. Peter and St. Paul, at St. Petersburg, without charge preferred against him; whether his attention has been drawn to a memorial speaking of the position in the esteem of all who knew him, of whatever shade of politics or creed, which Mr. Tchayskovsky has won for himself during the thirty years residence in England and the United States; whether he is aware that a petition of similar weight has been adopted in the United States, and that the eminent medical men, Professors Bechtereff and Volkhoff, report that Mr. Tchayskovsky's life is endangered by his internment, he being of an advanced age and suffering from heart disease; and whether, under the circumstances, anything can be done by the Foreign Office on behalf of British subjects who are relatives of this distinguished man to secure that he may be released on bail while awaiting trial.

(*Answered by Secretary Sir Edward Grey.*) I understand that Mr. Tchaykovsky is charged with being implicated in revolutionary proceedings. He is not a British subject, and there is, therefore, no ground on which diplomatic action can be taken by His Majesty's Government.

Railway Crossing at Garryduff.

MR. JOHN O'DONNELL (Mayo, S.): To ask the President of the Board of Trade, whether he is aware that there is a crossing over the Great Southern and Western Railway in the townland of Garryduff, electoral division of Ballindine, Claremorris Union, and that the people of Garryduff, Woodstock, Carrowconnor, Levase, Cullane, Burris, Baleboy, Crimline, and Rockforth have to cross the line at this point; that there is no other convenient way for the vehicular traffic coming from and going to these places; that it is in close proximity to a wood and a sharp curve, which add to the danger; that recently when crossing the line a cart was caught by a passenger train and smashed to pieces, serious loss of life having being narrowly averted; and, seeing that the Claremorris District Council and the Mayo County Council forwarded representations to the Board of Trade for the necessity of having a gate lodge erected at the spot, with a gatekeeper in charge, with a view to saving life and property, whether efforts will be made to compel the railway company to take prompt steps to safeguard the lives of the numbers of people who have to pass there at all hours of the day and night.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) The crossing in question does not appear to be one of a public carriage road, and the railway company are, therefore, under no statutory obligation to employ a gatekeeper to supervise the traffic over the crossing. The Board of Trade have no jurisdiction, but they have called the company's attention to the matter, and have received a reply to the effect that the crossing is not considered a dangerous one.

Archer Street Post Office, W.

MR. STANGER (Kensington, N.): To ask the Postmaster-General whether the Archer Street post office in Westbourne Grove is in need of being rebuilt; whether plans for the purpose are yet completed, and possession of the necessary land obtained; and when the building operations are likely to be commenced.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) It is not proposed to rebuild this office; but plans for enlarging and improving it have been prepared and are under consideration. Legal difficulties have delayed the completion of the purchase of the necessary additional land, but I hope that a settlement will be reached before long.

Transmission of Press Telegrams.

MR. JOWETT (Bradford, W.): To ask the Postmaster-General whether a Departmental Committee has reported that the existing arrangements of the telegraph service are now inadequate to provide for the increasing hurry and earlier publication of provincial newspapers; whether, as a consequence, the Committee has recommended joint private wires from a London agency to the offices of provincial newspapers, staffed by operators unattached to the Post Office; whether the Committee considers that there is no general objection to the taking away from the hands of the Postmaster-General of the work of transmitting news from London to the provinces; and whether, in view of the possibility of the Postmaster-General permitting a great extension of the system of sub-contracting in the telegraph service, a Select Committee of this House may be appointed to consider the present position of the telegraph service.

To ask the Postmaster-General whether he is in a position to inform the House if he has completed any arrangements with newspaper proprietors or news agencies for taking over the transmission of news messages in accordance with the recommendations of a Departmental Committee; and whether he proposes to insert in the conditions that all telegraph operators employed in the transmission of messages over wires loaned to private companies by the Post Office shall be paid the same rates of wages as are paid to established postal telegraph operators working in the same town.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) I do not know that I can usefully add to the replies which I gave to the hon. Member on the 7th and 20th ultimo, which contain full information on the present position of the question. I may add, however, that I see no reason for appointing a Select Committee to consider the present position of the telegraph service.

Ireland and the Sugar Duty.

MR. O'SHEE (Waterford, W.): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he is aware that the Dungarvan Urban Council has passed a resolution objecting to the heavy burden imposed on Ireland by the extra duty on sugar, which presses severely on the poor; and whether he will consider the remission of the same favourably.

(*Answered by Mr. Asquith.*) Yes, Sir. I have received a copy of the Resolution in question through my right hon. friend the Chief Secretary, and, like all other representations on the subject of taxation, it will receive careful consideration.

Dog Dealers and Dog Licences.

MR. DICKINSON (St. Pancras, N.): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he is aware that the Dog Tax as at present levied falls with undue severity upon dealers in dogs, inasmuch as they have to pay upon the maximum number of dogs that may, at any one time, be kept for the purposes of sale; and whether he can see his way to amend the law so as to allow of such dealers being taxed upon some less onerous and more equitable system.

(*Answered by Mr. Asquith.*) The law and practice in the matter is as stated in the Question; but I do not see that any hardship arises, nor does there appear to me to be any sufficient reason for altering the system.

Friendly Societies and Income-Tax.

MR. T. R. BETHELL (Essex, Maldon): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer if the arrangement made with building societies as regards exemption from payment of income-tax upon borrowers' interest, as sanctioned by Form No. 13, Building Societies (Arrangement B.) Income-Tax, can be extended to registered friendly societies upon similar information being supplied by them as now given by building societies.

(*Answered by Mr. Asquith.*) I would refer my hon. friend to the Answer which I gave to the same Question by the hon. Member for the Harwich Division on 30th March.

Suggested Tax on Traction Engines, etc.

MR. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, in view of the fact that damage is done by traction engines and heavy locomotives to roads which have to be kept in constant repair by the local authorities, he will consider the advisability of recommending the imposition of a tax upon such conveyances and thereby relieve the ratepayers from the burden now imposed on them.

(*Answered by Mr. Asquith.*) The suggestion is one which shall not fail to receive due consideration in connection with the reform of local taxation generally, which, as the hon. Member is probably aware, is engaging the attention of the Government.

The Duke of York's School.

MR. HORNIMAN (Chelsea): To ask the Secretary of State for War from what source the capital expended on the present site and buildings of the Duke of York's School, Chelsea, was derived; whence came the capital for the purchase of the new site near Dover and the buildings now being erected there, and by what board or authority was the money allotted and expended; and what authority will control the disposal of the present site and buildings at Chelsea, and the disposal of any balance should the same be sold.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) It appears from the records which are readily available that the moneys for the acquisition of the site and the provision of the present buildings were, derived partly from public funds and partly from unclaimed prize moneys. The money for the new site and buildings is being provisionally met from the Military Works Loan. The money was allotted by the Army Council, acting in concert with the Treasury and the Office of Works. The authority for the disposal of the present site and buildings and the moneys derived from the sale thereof will be the Office of Works, acting in concert with the Army Council and the Treasury.

Mr. HORNIMAN: To ask the Secretary of State for War under what Act, scheme, or bequest is the capital represented by the building and site of the Duke of York's School, Chelsea, administered; and are the same printed, or where can they be inspected by persons interested therein.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The estate of the Duke of York's School is administered under the Royal Military Asylum Chelsea (Transfer) Act, 1884.

Mortality in the Licensed Victuallers' Trade.

Mr. CHARLES ROBERTS (Lincoln): To ask the President of the Local Government Board if he can give particulars of the mortality for the period 1900–2, at five age-groups of ages, from twenty-five to thirty-five, thirty-five to forty-five, forty-five to fifty-five, fifty-five to sixty-five, and sixty-five upwards, for all occupied males, brewers, publicans, including innkeepers and inn-servants, publicans in London, publicans in industrial districts, and publicans in agricultural districts respectively.

(*Answered by Mr. John Burns.*) The following are the particulars of the mortality in England and Wales in the period 1900–2 at five age-groups of males (aged twenty-five and upwards) engaged in the supply of intoxicating liquors, as compared in each age-group with that of all occupied males taken as 100—

	25.	35.	45.	55.	65.
Occupied males - - - - - - -	100	100	100	100	100
Brewers - - - - - - -	121	157	143	145	108
Publicans, inn-keepers, inn-servants - -	230	217	167	150	99
,, in London - - - - - -	220	252	194	146	93
,, in industrial districts - - -	256	226	193	175	107
,, in agricultural districts - -	194	163	140	134	95

Standard for Preservatives in Food.

Mr. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): To ask the President of the Local Government Board whether, owing to the absence of any standard for preservatives in food and the consequent confusion prevailing in the public mind, he will be prepared to incorporate in the regulations he is now drafting under the powers conferred upon him by the Public Health (Regulation of Foods) Act, 1907, a clause fixing such standard, and thereby give practical effect to the recommendations of the Departmental Committee of 1900.

(*Answered by Mr. John Burns.*) In view of the importance of the public health and trade interests concerned, regulations dealing with preservatives in food generally could not be made without considerable preliminary inquiry or without supplementing the investigations of the Departmental Committee in various directions. In these circumstances it has not been found practicable to include regulations on this subject in the series now in preparation, but I have not lost sight of the matter, and have already directed inquiries to be made with regard to the present position of preservatives in certain food stuffs.

THE LATE PRIME MINISTER.

*THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. ASQUITH, Fifeshire, E.): Mr. Speaker, many of us, Sir, have come here fresh from the service in Westminster Abbey, where, amidst the monuments and memories of great men, the nation took its last farewell of all that was mortal in our late Prime Minister. Sir, there is not a man whom I am addressing now who does not feel that our tribute to the dead would be incomplete if this House, of which, by seniority, he was the father, and which for more than two years he has led, were not to offer to his memory to-day its own special mark of reverence and affection. I shall therefore, Sir, propose before I sit down that we should lay aside for to-day the urgent business which has brought us together, and that the House do at once adjourn until to-morrow. It is within a few months of forty years since Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman took his seat in this Chamber. Mr. Gladstone had just entered upon his first Premiership in the plenitude of his powers and of his authority. A new House, elected upon an extended suffrage, had brought to Westminster new men, new ideas—as some thought—a new era. Among the newcomers there were probably few, judged by the superficial tests which are commonly applied, who seemed less obviously destined than Mr. Campbell, as he then was, for ultimate leadership. There have been men who, in the cruel phrase of the ancient historian, were universally judged to be fit for the highest place only until they attained and held it. Our late Prime Minister belonged to that rarer class whose fitness for such a place, until they attain and hold it, is never adequately understood. It is true that he reached office much earlier in his Parliamentary career than is the case with most politicians. In successive Governments, at the War Office, at the Admiralty, at the Irish Office, and at the War Office again, he rendered devoted and admirable, if little advertised, service to the State. It is no secret, and it is sufficient proof that he himself had no ambition for leadership, that when he was for the second time a Cabinet Minister, he aspired, Sir, to be seated in your chair. But though he had too modest an estimate of himself to desire, and still less to seek, the first place in the State, it fell to him, after years of much storm and stress by a title which no one disputed; and he filled it with an ever-growing recognition in all quarters of his unique qualifications. What was the secret of the hold which in these later days he unquestionably had on the admiration and affection of men of all parties and all creeds? If, as I think was the case, he was one of those men who require to be fully known to be justly measured, may I not say that the more we knew him, both followers and opponents, the more we became aware that on the moral as on the intellectual side he had endowments, rare in themselves, still rarer in their combination? For example, he was singularly sensitive to human suffering and wrong doing, delicate and even tender in his sympathies, always disposed to despise victories won in any sphere by mere brute force, an almost passionate lover of peace. And yet we have not seen in our time a man of greater courage—courage not of the defiant or aggressive type, but calm, patient, persistent, indomitable. Let me, Sir, recall another apparent contrast in his nature. In politics I think he may be fairly described as an idealist in aim, and an optimist by temperament. Great causes appealed to him. He was not ashamed, even on the verge of old age, to see visions and to dream dreams. He had no misgivings as to the future of democracy. He had a single-minded and unquenchable faith in the unceasing progress and the growing unity of mankind. None the less, in the selection of means, in the daily work of tilling the political field, in the choice of this man or that for some particular task, he showed not only that practical shrewdness which came to him from his Scottish ancestors, but the outlook, the detachment, the insight of a cultured citizen of the world.

In truth, Mr. Speaker, that which gave him the authority and affection, which, taken together, no one among his contemporaries enjoyed in an equal measure, was not one quality more than another or any union of qualities; it was the man himself. He never put himself forward, yet no one had greater tenacity of purpose. He was the least cynical of mankind, but no one had a keener eye for the humours and ironies of the political situation. He was a strenuous and uncompromising fighter, a strong Party man, but he harboured no resentments, and was generous to a fault in appreciation of the work of others, whether friends or foes. He met both good and evil fortune with the same unclouded brow, the same unruffled temper, the same unshakable confidence in the justice and righteousness of his cause. Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman had hardly attained the highest place, and made himself fully known, when a domestic trial, the saddest that can come to any of us, darkened his days, and dealt what proved to be a fatal blow to his heart. But he never for a moment shirked his duty to the State. He laboured on—we here have seen it at close quarters—he laboured on under the strain of anxiety, and later, under the maiming sense of a loss that was ever fresh, always ready to respond to every public demand. And, Sir, as we knew him here, so after he was stricken down in the midst of his work, a martyr, if ever there was one, to conscience and duty, so he continued to the end. I can never forget the last time that I was privileged to see him, almost on the eve of his resignation. His mind was clear, his interest in the affairs of the country and of this House was undimmed; his talk was still lighted up by flashes of that homely and mellow wisdom which was peculiarly his own. Still more memorable, and not less characteristic, were the serene patience, the untroubled equanimity, the quiet trust, with which during those long and weary days, he awaited the call he knew was soon to come. He has gone to his rest, and to-day in this House, of which he was the senior and the most honoured Member, we may call a truce in the strife of parties, while we remember together our common loss, and pay our united homage to a gracious and cherished memory—

> " How happy is he born and taught
> That serveth not another's will;
> Whose armour is his honest thought,
> And simple truth his utmost skill;
>
> * * * * *
>
> " This man is freed from servile bands
> Of hope to rise or fear to fall;
> Lord of himself, though not of lands,
> And, having nothing, yet hath all."

Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS (Kent, St. Augustine's): I deeply regret the absence of the Leader of the Opposition, and I have reason to know that it is a matter of most sincere regret to my right hon. friend that he is unable to be in his place to-day, but, as the House is aware, he is at this moment disabled by illness. Had my right hon. friend been present, he would have rejoiced to bear testimony to the high regard he entertained for the character and career of the statesman whose loss we mourn to-day. I know that as an opponent my right hon. friend regarded him as scrupulously fair and chivalrous, and during his Leadership he always observed the high traditions of this House. In the unavoidable and regretted absence of my right hon. friend, it falls to me in far feebler phrases to second the Motion moved in such eloquent terms by the Prime Minister. I feel myself most fortunate in knowing that it needs no persuasion on my part to induce this House to accept the Resolution unanimously. While in this country the system of government by Party has long obtained and is firmly fixed, yet I maintain that there is no country, and no Assembly in any country, where the relations of political opponents are more free from personal bitterness than they are in this country and in this House of Commons; or where, on occasions such as these, there is greater readiness to drop all party prejudice and to recognise to the full the services rendered to the State by political opponents. It is not for me to attempt to follow the Prime Minister in his survey of the public life of his predecessor, but I would wish to be allowed to associate myself with all the tributes the right hon. Gentleman has paid to the memory of Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman. It would ill become me to criticise the late Prime Minister's policy or his political action; to do so might lay me open to a charge of insincerity, and, indeed, to make any controversial allusion to them would at once put me out of touch with the House on the present occasion. If there were anything in the present Motion that seemed to pledge the country or the House to approval of any particular hopes of the deceased statesman I can understand that questions might be raised or difficulties found in some quarters. But that is not the case. All that we do in supporting this Motion is to honour the memory of one who for forty years, by his high personal character, good temper, and urbanity, endeared himself to all with whom he was brought into personal contact and enjoyed the universal esteem of this House; and to put on record our appreciation of a public servant whose service to the State has been both honourable and distinguished. While we on this side of the House regarded his attitude and policy on some problems of great importance with some alarm, we have never viewed him with any anger or dislike, and even when his opinions may have been distasteful to some of us, we have ever had a kindly regard for him as a man. Therefore we can more fully understand and realise the warm affection—an affection which was earned by devoted and distinguished Party services, by energies spent, perhaps, too freely in the service of the State and in the service of his Party—we can, I say, understand the feelings with which he was regarded by his supporters in this House, and we on this side of the House cannot but admire the determination and courage with which he stuck to his political convictions, never flinched from opinions because they might be unpopular, and never failed at the lowest ebb of the political tide, or during the gloomiest period of his Party's fortunes, in his position, first as Leader of the Opposition, then as Leader of this House. No one could have been more popular nor did any one exist who had the power of inspiring a greater or a more general personal affection. In this capacity we have on this side of the House often had occasion to admire his conduct, tact, and resource, while we have appreciated to the full, although we have sometimes been disconcerted by, his wit and shrewdness. In common with his own followers we watched in sympathy and with solicitude the illness through which he passed. We had hoped that when the cares and weight of office had been removed from his shoulders he might have been restored to health and comparative vigour, and looked forward to a good old age with peace and contentment. But that was not to be. By his removal a long and honourable career has been brought to an end; the public life of this country thereby is far poorer, while this House has suffered a loss from which it will not readily or quickly recover, a loss which I would like to emphasise has been felt by his political opponents as much as by his political friends.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the House do now adjourn."—(*Mr. Asquith.*)

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland): In the absence of my hon. friend the Member for Waterford I rise to say that we, the representatives of a cause which he so long advocated in this House, feel that we cannot allow an occasion like this to pass without, on behalf of Ireland, saying a word as to the loss which we have suffered in the death of Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman. Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman boasted rightly that he was not only a Scot, but a Scot of Scots. We Irishmen feel that he had a love for our country and our cause as though he were one of us. We had an affection for him as if he were one of our own people. I have been told by those who knew him intimately that among the many causes that appealed to his generous nature there was none which made a readier appeal to it than the cause of Ireland. I know that it was only the imperative orders of his doctors that prevented him coming down, even after the beginning of his fatal illness, to say a word upon the Irish Resolution. We honoured him and loved him, and regret his death as one of the greatest and heaviest losses that our people and our country ever sustained.

Sir ALFRED THOMAS (Glamorganshire, E.): I beg on behalf of the Welsh Members to express the profound regret with which we heard of the passing away of the late Prime Minister. As one who keenly sympathised with small nationalities we are under a lasting debt of gratitude to his memory. His life was a noble example of a high-minded Christian gentleman, and we can all say, as John Bright said of Cobden, "I little knew how much I loved him until I found I had lost him."

Mr. ARTHUR HENDERSON (Durham, Barnard Castle): In associating my friends and myself with the magnificent tribute that has been paid to the late Prime Minister, I am sure that, though my words are few, the expressions I make use of will nevertheless be accepted as perfectly sincere. We are the youngest Party in this House, and yet we have been here during the whole of the time that the late Prime Minister presided in his high position over our Parliamentary destinies. Though our experience of him has been short, it was sufficiently long to endear him, I will venture to say, more than any other politician in this country to every member of the Labour Party. The more we got to know in our official position of the late Prime Minister the more we were led to realise that he possessed a very great heart for the poor of this country. He recognised the social wrongs under which the poor are compelled to live, and he was anxious, either by the methods which he and his party desired to put forward for redressing those wrongs or by understanding the proposals which we put forward in the name of the poor—proposals oft-times of a different character from those which he himself put forward—he was anxious,

I say, to understand our proposals, in order that something might be done to alleviate the vast amount of suffering which the poorer of the working classes so constantly experience; and in this way his readiness sympathetically to consider the views of my colleagues and myself endeared him in an unmistakable way to every member of the Labour Party. There always stands out in association with his life one event which especially appeals, not only to those of us who have the honour to represent in a very direct sense organised labour in this House, but also to organised labour throughout the whole country. That particular chapter in his life was in those dark days when there was a minority in this country who felt that the experience we were going through in South Africa was not, as the majority, in their opinion probably rightly, thought, fully justified. Organised labour held the opinion that the experience was not justified, and he whose loss we mourn to-day was at the head of a small minority in the country who shared with organised labour that opinion, and, though that opinion was repudiated, scorned, and scoffed at, and though nicknames were applied to us and opprobrium thrown at us, we always rejoice to think that he maintained his position in this House and the country with a fidelity to his convictions that gave him a position in the hearts of organised workers in this country second to that of no other statesman. The loss we mourn to-day is nowhere more keenly felt than in the ranks of the Parliamentary Labour Party, and again I say I hope my words will be accepted as perfectly sincere.

Question put, and agreed to.

Resolved, "That this House do now adjourn."—(*Mr. Asquith.*)

Adjourned accordingly at twenty-seven minutes after Three o'clock.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Tuesday, 28th April, 1908.

The House met at a quarter before Three of the Clock.

NEW WRIT.

New Writ for the Montrose District of Burghs, in the room of the Right Hon. John Morley, O.M. (Manor of Northstead).—(*Mr. Whiteley.*)

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDER 65 COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. Speaker laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order 65 has been complied with, viz. :—Argentine North-Eastern Railway Bill [Lords].

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time.

PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS NOT PREVIOUSLY INQUIRED INTO COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. Speaker laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto, have been complied with, viz. :—St. Marylebone Borough Council (Superannuation) Bill [Lords]; Cardiff Railway Bill [Lords]; Argentine North-Eastern Railway Bill [Lords]; Skegness Urban District Council Bill [Lords].

Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time.

Blaydon and Ryton Water (Transfer) Bill (King's Consent signified).—Bill read the third time, and passed.

Knott End Railway Bill; Louth and East Coast Railway (Transfer) Bill.—Read the third time, and passed.

North British and Mercantile Insurance Company Bill [Lords] (by Order).—Read a second time, and committed.

Norwich Union Fire Insurance Society Bill [Lords] (by Order).—Read a second time, and committed.

PETITIONS.

ALDERMEN (BOROUGH ELECTIONS).

Petiton from Plymouth, for alteration of law; to lie upon the Table.

CHILDREN BILL.

Petition from Denny and Dunipace, for alteration; to lie upon the Table.

CHILDREN BILL.

Petitions in favour: From Gosport; Leicester; and Royal Sanitary Institute; to lie upon the Table.

COAL MINES (EIGHT HOURS) (No. 2) BILL.

Petitions against: From Worcester; Liverpool; and Motherwell; to lie upon the Table.

COAL MINES (EIGHT HOURS) (No. 2) BILL.

Petitions in favour: From Alfreton; Ashgate; Aspatria; Baggraw; Balsover; Bandeath; Banknock; Bannockburn; Barlborough; Batonriff; Bedminster; Bellshill; Bogfield; Bonds Main; Braysdown; Bredbury; Brodsworth; Burradon; Cadeby; Carmyle; Cæpontbren; Cawdor; Chevington; Church; Cilwern; Clay Cross (two); Craigreak; Creswell; Cross Hands; Cwmteg; Dailly; Daldowie; Dalzill; Denny; Denny Wanhead; Dronfield; Duffryn; Dunkerton; East Holywell; East Plean; Eckington; Espieside; Foxcote; Gelly Ceedrim; Glangarnant; Glaswell; Gorsygarnant; Grangemouth; Grassmoor (two); Greystonlea; Halton; Hartford; Hasland; Heddon; Hipthorne Lane; Holytown; Howmuir; Kenmuir; Kenmuirhill; Killamarsh; Kilsyth; Kirkwood; Langwith; Leven; Ludlows; Markham; Middle Pit; Morningside; Motherwell (two); North Motherwell; North Seaton; Old Avenue; Oldham; Oxcroft; Palace;

Pantyffynnon; Parkhead; Park House; Pentremawr; Pilsley; Pleasley; Polmaise; Ponthenry; Poynton; Quarter Denny; Radcliffe; Redding; Renishaw Park; Rhos; Salsburgh; Seghill; Seymour; Shankhouse; Shettleston; Shieldhill; Shireoaks; Shotts; Slamannan; Southgate; Spinkhill; Staveley; Thankerton; Tupton; Uddingston; Waleswood; Warsop Main; Wells Way; Wernos; West Kiveton; Whittington Moor; Whitwell; Williamthorpe; Woodhall; and Writhlington; to lie upon the Table.

DAIRIES (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition of the Royal Sanitary Institute, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL.

Petition from Wood Ditton, against; to lie upon the Table.

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL.

Petitions in favour; From Camberwell; Colwyn Bay; Cramlington; Easton; East Stratton; Frome; Plymouth; Rhayader; Talybont; and Torquay; to lie upon the Table.

HOME WORK REGULATION BILL.

Petition of the Royal Sanitary Institute, against; to lie upon the Table.

HOUSING, TOWN PLANNING, ETC., BILL.

Petition from Stirling, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

INFANT LIFE PROTECTION BILL.

Petition of the Royal Sanitary Institute, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSED PREMISES (ELECTION DAYS) CLOSING BILL.

Petition from Edinburgh and Leith, against; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSED PREMISES (EXCLUSION OF CHILDREN).

Petition from Mortimer, for legislation; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSING BILL.

Petitions against: From Accrington; Aston; Aylesbury; Bath (two); Berkeley; Biggleswade; Blackpool (two); Bristol; Burghfield; Burley; Burnley; Byfield; Caerphilly; Campbeltown; Cardiff; Chasetown; Chesterfield; Colne; Cornwall; Curdworth; Dover (two); Dundry; Eccleshall (three); Erdington; Garforth; Gloucester; Gosport; Halifax (thirteen); Handsworth; Hanham; Heeley (two); Hurst Green; Llanelly; Luxborough; Maesteg; Minworth (two); Mortimer; Newbury; North Shields; Otley (four); Pontypridd; Portsmouth; Rockwell Green; Ruardean; Rushpidge; Saffron Walden (two); St. Albans; St. Austell; Saxton cum Scarthingwell; Sheffield (three); Spitsby; Stamford; Stoke Mandeville; Sutton Coldfield; Taunton; Tewkesbury; Tilehurst; Wadworth; Walmley; Warton; Wellington; Wendover; Westwoodside; Windsor (two); Woking; Wraxall; and Yeadon (two); to lie upon the Table.

MR. W. E. HARVEY (Derbyshire, N.E.) presented a petition against the Bill, which, he said, purported to come from 1,300 inhabitants of North-East Derbyshire, but on examination he found that the signatories hailed from Birmingham, London, Sittingbourne, West Hartlepool, Doncaster, Burton-on-Trent, and other places.

MR. JOHN WARD (Stoke-on-Trent): Is it possible for a Member to move the rejection of a petition which purports to be signed by people in a certain locality, but which bears the signatures of people residing in all parts of the country?

*MR. SPEAKER: A man may have two residences.

LICENSING BILL.

Petitions for alteration: From Battersea; Benwell; Gosport; Guiseley; Islington; Newcastle-on-Tyne; South East London Auxiliary of the Sunday School Union; and Yeadon; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSING BILL.

Petitions in favour: From Aberdeen (eight); Aberforth; Abermeurig; Aberystwyth (eight); Airdrie; Airth; Aitkenhead (two); Allonby (two); Alvaston; Andover (two); Anstruther;

Ardwick; Askam-in-Furness; Aspatria (two); Aspull; Aston (three); Avonbridge (two); Auchtermuchty; Ayr (two); Baillieston; Bampton; Banff; Banton; Barnsbury (two); Barnton (two); Barrington; Bath; Battersea (two); Beckenham; Beeston; Bellshill (two); Berth; Berwick-on-Tweed; Bedminster; Biggleswade; Bingley; Birnhead; Birmingham (four); Bishopton; Blackpool; Blochairn; Bodmin; Bollington (two); Bon Accord; Bonnington; Bonnybridge (two); Boston; Bow; Bradwell; Brannel; Bridford; Bridgend; Bridge of Weir; Bridgeton (two); Brislington (two); Bristol (four); Brixton; Brockley; Bromley; Broughton; Bryngwenith; Bugle; Bugsworth; Burbage; Burgh; Burley-in-Wharfdale; Burnham; Bury (two); Camberwell (two); Camblesforth; Cambusbarron; Camelon; Campbeltown; Campsie; Cardigan; Carlton; Carmunock; Carmyle; Carntyne; Carrickfergus; Catrine; Chalfont St. Giles; Chapelknowe and Gretna; Chryston (two); Cinderford; Clapham; Clavering; Cleland; Clevedon; Clydebank; Coatbridge (four); Coleford; Colmonell; Colwyn Bay (two); Cramlington; Crossford-by-Carlake; Cupar; Custom House; Cwmystwyth; Dalton; Dalton-in-Furness; Darlington (two); Dawley; Denny (two); Deskford; Dihewyd; Disley; Dolan; Drax; Dronfield; Dulverton (two); Dundee (two); Dunipace; Dunoon; East Morton; Easton; East Stratton; Ecclefechan; Egremont; Elburton; Ellesmere Port; Elm Park; Eltringham; Evenwood; Eskdale Muir; Exeter (five); Fairfield; Falkirk (two); Fareham (four); Farnborough; Faversham (three); Finnart; Fordyce; Formby (three); Fourstones; Fowey; Frome (three); Frosterley; Garston; Gartmore; Gee Cross; Gibeon Mydrim; Girvan (three); Glasgow (eighteen); Glenboig; Gloucester (four); Glynarthen; Gore; Gosport (three); Grangemouth (two); Grange over Sands; Grantown on Spey; Grassmoor; Great Sanghall; Greenock (eleven); Guiseley; Haggs; Hamilton (two); Hammersmith (two); Harthill; Hatherden (two); Haydon Bridge; Hedge End; Heeley; Henshaw; Hereford; Hexham; Highbury; Higher Ardwick; High Peak; Hilmacolm; Hirst; Holt; Hornsey (three); Houghton le Spring; Howden le Wear; Hoylake; Huntingdon (two); Hurlford; Hyde; Ilkeston; Ilkley; Inverkip; Ipswich; Irlam's o' th' Heights; Irvine (two); Isleworth; Kelso (two); Kennoway; Kidderminster (two); Kilbarchan; Kilmarnock; Kingarth; Kingsbridge; King's Norton; Kirkby-in-Furness; Kirkoswald; Lampeter (three); Landrake; Langharne; Lanivet; Larbert; Leeds; Leicester; Letchworth; Leven; Linton; Liskeard (eleven); Liverpool; Llanarmon (two); Llanarth (two); Llanbadarnfawr; Llanbister; Llandrindod Wells; Llandynan; Llangwyryfon; Llanrhysted; Llantarnam; Lledrod; London (two); Long Eaton (two); Longtown; Looe; Loth; Lower Weston; Lytham; Maesteg (two); Mapperley; Maybole; Meersbrook; Melksham; Merse and Teviotdale; Mevagissey (four); Middleton in Teesdale (two); Mid Radnor; Millport (two); Milngavil (two); Minster; Mold; Moniaive; Moorwater; Moss Side; Motherwell (four); Mottram; Moulton; Nantymoel (five); Nebo; Neston; Netherton; New Brighton (two); Newburgh; Newbury; Newcastle-on-Tyne (six); New Cummock; Newport (Fife); Newport (Mon.) (two); Newport Pagnell (two); Newquay; New Stevenston; Newton on Ayr; Nitshills; Northampton (four); North Cornwall; North Kensington (three); North Seaton; North Shields (six); Old Bolinbroke; Oldham; Oreston; Otley (two); Oxford Street; Par Station; Peak Forrest; Peasedown; Peckham; Pegmouth; Pegswood; Pelynt; Pendleton (four); Penybont (two); Penygraig; Pitsford; Plymouth (three); Polperro; Ponteland; Pontyberim; Port Glasgow; Portscatho; Poynton; Prestwick; Queenzieburn; Rainford; Rennington; Renwick; Retford; Rhayader; Roche (two); Rothesay (seven); Rothiemay; Ruabon (three); Rusholme; St. Albans; St Anns; St. Austell; St. Blazey; St. Columb; St. Dennis; St. Clears; St. Margarets on Thames; Salford (three); Seacombe (four); Seaton Delaval (three); Seaton Hirst; Seghill (two); Shankhouse; Shaw; Sheerness (six); Sheffield (five); Shettleston (two); Sittingbourne; Spilsby (two); Southbourne; Southport; South Shields and Tyne

Dock (forty-three); Stapleford; Staveley; Steeple Claydon; Stirling (three); Stirlingshire; Stocksfield; Stoke Newington (three); Swanage; Talybont; Tanygroes; Tayport; Thurlby; Timsbury; Titchfield; Tiverton; Tonbridge; Tongue; Torpoint (two); Tow Law; Tregaron; Tremar Coombe; Trevelmond; Trisant; Troon; Turnchapel; Turvey; Two Mills; Tynemouth; Uddingston (three); Upper End; Upper Holloway; Upper Parkstone; Upper Weston; Veryan; Warrington; Warsash (two); Weaster; Wellfield; Wem; West Cramlington; Westgate; West Kirby; West Looe; Westminster; West Woodburn; Whitehall; Whitehill; Whiting Bay; Whitley Bay (two); Whixall; Wick; Widdington; Wigan; Wilmslow; Wishaw; Woodborough; Woodseats; Worcester; Worksop (three); Yardley Hastings (two); Yeadon (two); Yealmpton; York; and Ystradmeurig; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSING BILL AND LIQUOR TRAFFIC (LOCAL OPTION) (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Coatbridge, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

LIQUOR TRAFFIC (LOCAL OPTION) (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petitions in favour: From Aberdeen (two); Airth; Bainsford; Bridgeton (two); Buckie; Chryston; Coatbridge (two); Dalmellington; Falkirk (three); Girvan; Glasgow (six); Govanhill; Greenock (two); Jamestown; Kilsyth; Ladybank; Lauder; Lochwinnoch; Rothesay; St. Kiaran; Stirling; and Uddingston; to lie upon the Table.

METROPOLITAN SEWERS AND DRAINS BILL.

Petition of the Royal Sanitary Institute, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

PUBLIC HEALTH ACT (1875) AMENDMENT (WATER RIGHTS) BILL.

Petition of the Royal Sanitary Institute, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICERS BILL.

Petition of the Royal Sanitary Institute, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

PUBLIC HOUSES (EXCLUSION OF CHILDREN) (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Chryston, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

BANKRUPTCY ACT, 1883 (PROCEEDINGS).

Account presented, showing the Receipts and Expenditure on account of Bankruptcy Proceedings during the year ended 31st March, 1908 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 124.]

COMPANIES (WINDING-UP) ACT, 1890.

Account presented, showing Receipts and Expenditure on account of Proceedings during the year ended 31st March, 1908 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, to be printed. [No. 125.]

ARKLOW HARBOUR.

Copy presented, of Report of the Arklow Harbour Commissioners and Statement of Accounts for 1907 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

EVICTED TENANTS (IRELAND) ACT, 1907.

Copy presented, of Regulations made by the Treasury under The Evicted Tenants (Ireland) Act, 1907, dated 14th April, 1908 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

SHERIFF COURTS (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1907.

Copy presented, of Act of Sederunt anent Procedure in Appeals, under Sections 5 and 30 of The Sheriff Courts (Scotland) Act, 1907 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

SHERIFF COURTS (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1907.

Copy presented, of Act of Sederunt regulating the Fees of Agents and others in the Sheriff Court [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

Copy presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Report, Annual Series, No. 3971 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION.

Copy presented, of Return of Advances made under The Irish Land Act, 1903, during the month of May, 1907 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

DRUNKENNESS (IRELAND).

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 26th February; Mr. Sloan]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 126.]

LAW CHARGES AND CRIMINAL PROSECUTIONS (IRELAND).

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 14th April; Mr. Long]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 127.]

SHOP HOURS ACT, 1904.

Copy presented, of Order made by the Municipal Council of the City of Dublin, and confirmed by the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, fixing the Hours of Closing certain classes of Shops within the City [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

METROPOLITAN POLICE.

Accounts presented, of the Metropolitan Police and the Police Pension Funds for the year ended 31st March, 1908 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 128.]

ARMY (VOLUNTEER CORPS).

Copy presented, of Annual Return of the Volunteer Corps of Great Britain for the year 1907 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

PAPER LAID UPON THE TABLE BY THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE.

Thames Conservancy, General Report and Accounts of the Conservators for 1907 [by Act]; to be printed. [No. 129.]

FLEETS (GREAT BRITAIN AND FOREIGN COUNTRIES).

Return ordered, "showing the Fleets of Great Britain, France, Russia, Germany, Italy, United States of America, and Japan on the 31st day of March, 1908, distinguishing: Battleships, built and building; Cruisers, built and building; Coast Defence Vessels, built and building; Torpedo Vessels, Torpedo Boat Destroyers, Torpedo Boats, and Submarines, built and building."

"Return to show Date of Launch, Date of Completion, Displacement, Horse-Power, and Armaments, reduced to one common scale (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 184, of Session 1907)."—(*Sir Charles Dilke.*)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Adulterated Calf Meal.

MR. HALPIN (Clare, W.): To ask the Vice-President of the Department of Agriculture (Ireland) whether he can state the number of samples of calf meal the inspectors have analysed for the six months ending 1st March, 1908, and the number of samples that were adulterated; and whether the inspectors have taken proceedings against those who sold the adulterated stuff.

(*Answered by Mr. T. W. Russell.*) The Department have analysed, during the period mentioned, thirteen samples of meals sold in Ireland for calf-rearing purposes. This period does not, however, include the season when such materials are in general use. The Department have most serious grounds of complaint that proprietary meals are often in very bad condition, and even when of the guaranteed composition, though they cannot strictly be regarded as adulterated, they are generally most unsuitable for calf-rearing purposes, and in every respect too expensive as compared with the materials recommended by the Department. In many cases the proprietary calf-meals are not sufficiently nutritious, with the result that when calves are fed on them they become sickly, and in some instances have died. In two instances in County Kerry, where after most careful inquiry the Department had every reason to believe that the use of protoid milk substitute, sold by the Protoid Company, of Liverpool, had actually caused the death of calves, they advised the purchasers to sue the company for damages. The purchasers took steps to do so, but the Department were subsequently informed that, owing to the death of the agent who sold the meal, the proceedings would have had to be taken in Liverpool, a course the farmers were not prepared to adopt.

Alleged Frauds on Irish Farmers.

Mr. VINCENT KENNEDY (Cavan, W.): To ask the Vice-President of the Department of Agriculture (Ireland) whether it has been brought to his notice that a man named Thomas James Turner, trading as Canning Russell and Company, of 40 to 48, Charterhouse Street, London, has for some time past been obtaining considerable consignments of farm products on credit from poor Irish farmers all over Ireland; is he aware that, in the course of certain legal proceedings against Canning Russell and Company, it was ascertained by Mr. H. S. A. Foy, of Bush Lane House, Cannon Street, solicitor for a judgment creditor in Ireland, that large numbers of Irish producers had never been paid for the goods they had supplied which had been disposed of in London by this man Turner; and, seeing that a large number of Irish farmers are being and have been victimised, will he take steps to safeguard the interests of Irish agriculturists and members of co-operative societies against the continuance of this firm's misrepresentations.

(*Answered by Mr. T. W. Russell.*) One complaint respecting the firm mentioned was recently received, from which it appeared that legal proceedings for non-payment of debts had been more than once instituted against the firm. Mr. Foy's name was not mentioned in the communication sent to the Department. With regard to the last part of the Question, publicity would seem to be the best safeguard against people in business, whether farmers or traders, being taken in by misrepresentations such as are referred to. It would not be practicable for the Department to advise Irish traders and farmers as to the financial stability of firms with which they may open accounts. The usual channels for information of this kind, such as Stubbs, are open to them, and, as a rule, are consulted by traders and by farmers, and by farmers' co-operative societies before opening new accounts.

Army Maps.

Mr. BELLAIRS (Lynn Regis): To ask the Secretary of State for War what sums of money were spent and what staff allowed for the provision of maps of possible theatres of war in 1903–4 and each subsequent year, including the provision made in the current financial year; and what was the average sum voted and staff allowed for the three years prior to the South African War.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) It is not considered to be in the interests of the public service to give to the whole world the detailed information required by the Question, but I shall be happy to show my hon. friend, or any other hon. Member, the details confidentially.

Education of Army Officers.

Mr. BELLAIRS: To ask the Secretary of State for War whether there has been a satisfactory improvement recorded in the Reports on the examinations for promotion of officers in the Regular Army since the 1904 Report, circulated by General Hutchison, commented on a regrettable feature of the examination being that a large number of candidates spelt badly and were unable to express themselves clearly, so being unable to impart instruction of any value to non-commissioned officers and men in one of the most important duties of rendering reports, and in regard to military engineering, tactics, and topography; and whether he can state if there has been a marked improvement since 1904, when the Report stated that the results could only be described as indifferent.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) There has been a steady and marked improvement in the matters referred to in the hon. Member's Question since 1904.

Expenditure per Man on the Territorial Force.

Colonel R. WILLIAMS (Dorsetshire, W.): To ask the Secretary of State for War what is the estimated annual expenditure per man on the Territorial Garrison Artillery as compared with the Volunteer Garrison Artillery, on the Territorial Cavalry as compared with the Yeomanry, and on the Territorial Infantry as compared with the Volunteer Infantry.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The normal annual expenditure per man of the arms in question is roughly estimated as follows:—

	Territorial Force.	Volunteer and Yeomanry.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Garrison Artillery -	8 11 0	7 0 0
Cavalry -	18 10 0	20 0 0
Infantry -	7 11 0	6 5 0

H.M.S. "Bulwark"—Dredging Naval Harbours.

Mr. BELLAIRS: To ask the First Lord of the Admiralty what was the maximum draught of H.M.S. "Bulwark" when taken up the Medway after her accident on the occasion of her successful docking in No. 9 dock at Chatham; and what has been the sum expended on dredging in the harbours and approaches of Chatham, Portsmouth, and Devonport, respectively, since the first Navy Works Bill of 1895 was introduced and up to the end of the financial year 1907–8.

(*Answered by Mr. McKenna.*) The maximum draught of H.M.S. "Bulwark" was 26 feet 3½ inches. The sums expended on dredging in the harbours and approaches of Chatham, Portsmouth, and Devonport respectively, since the first Navy Works Bill up to the end of the financial year 1907–8 were approximately as follows:—

	£
Chatham - - -	43,770
Portsmouth - - -	554,210
Devonport - - -	868,500

Value and Area of the Island of Vatersay.

Mr. DUNDAS WHITE (Dumbartonshire): To ask the Secretary for Scotland what is the approximate area and what is the approximate annual value for rating of the lands in Vatersay, on which the squatters have settled without the consent of Lady Gordon Cathcart.

(*Answered by Mr. Sinclair.*) The area of the Island of Vatersay is stated to be about 2,250 acres. The annual value is not separately given, but the amount appearing in the Valuation Roll for the whole farm, of which Vatersay forms a part, is £353.

Irish Land Purchase Finance.

Mr. BUTCHER (Cambridge University): To ask the First Lord of the Treasury, with reference to the Report of the Departmental Committee on Irish Land Purchase Finance, will the evidence taken by the Committee be laid before Parliament, and, if so, how soon will copies of it be obtainable; under the proposal in Paragraph 103 of the Report would the landlord receive an amount of guaranteed 2¾ per cent. stock which, if sold at 92 per cent. or any higher percentage of its face value, would produce the amount of his purchase-money in cash; and, if the market price of the stock were below 92 per cent. and the landlord had to sell a portion of it, for instance, to pay off mortgages and other superior interests, would the landlord have to sacrifice purchase-money to an amount equivalent to the difference between 92 per cent. and the lower market price which he might have to accept for any stock sold by him.

(*Answered by Mr. Asquith.*) A good deal of the evidence taken by the Committee was given on the understanding that it would be treated as confidential, and it would not be to the public interest to publish it. The interpretation placed by the hon. Member on the recommendation made in Paragraph 103 of the Report appears to me to be correct, but there would, of course, if that recommendation were adopted, be no obligation upon the landlord to exercise the option of being paid in stock if he regarded it as not to his interest to do so.

Local Authorities and the Explosives Act.

Sir F. BANBURY (City of London): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the resolution of the Association of Municipal Corporations passed at their annual meeting held at the Guildhall on 18th March last, to the effect that in the interests of public safety it was urgently necessary that the Explosives Act, 1875, should be amended, with a view to affording greater facilities to local authorities for exercising proper control; and whether he proposes taking any action in the matter, having regard to the rider attached to the verdict of the coroner's jury, to a similar effect, in the recent inquiry into the fatal explosion which occurred in the City of London on 1st January last.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) I have received a copy of the resolution referred to by the hon. Member. I hope as soon as the pressure of business admits of it, to appoint a small committee to consider the question of the suggested amendment of the Explosives Act, and other similar questions. The number of accidents is happily small.

Licensed Houses in Nottingham.

MR. RICHARDSON (Nottingham, S): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he can state how many licensed houses (off licences and on-licences) there are in the city of Nottingham, and how many transfers have taken place during the last ten years.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) The Licensing Statistics show that on 1st January, 1907, the last date for which exact figures are available, there were 579 on-licences in the city of Nottingham and 468 off-licences; total, 1,047. I have no information as to the number of transfers of licences which have taken place in Nottingham in the last ten years.

MR. RICHARDSON: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will supply to the Parliamentary representative of South Nottingham a list of the names of the licence-holders in the city of Nottingham, and the length of time that each has held his present licence.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) The information desired by the hon. Member will, I think, so far as it is available at all, be found in the register of licences required by Section 36 of the Licensing Act, 1872, to be kept by the clerk to the licensing justices. The statute provides that the register is open on the payment of a shilling to be inspected and copied by any ratepayer, and I am afraid I must refer the hon. Member to that source.

Removal of Manure from Foreign Animals Wharf.

MR. ROBINSON (Brecknock): To ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, if he is aware that manure from the sheds at Avonmouth where the Canadian cattle are housed on landing is railed away to different parts of the country; and, seeing that this practice is calculated to counteract the value of the restrictive regulations in force with regard to the importation of live cattle, whether the Board will put a stop to the practice.

(*Answered by Sir Edward Strachey.*) Manure is not allowed under any circumstances to be removed from a foreign animals wharf until all the animals carried in the vessel from which it is taken have been passed as healthy, and until it has been disinfected to the satisfaction of an inspector of the Board. If the inspector considers that the manure may introduce disease it would be destroyed or otherwise dealt with in accordance with instructions given by the Board. We see no necessity for any amendment of the orders on the subject.

Army Certificates in Lieu of Examination for Postal Sorters.

CAPTAIN CRAIG (Down, E.): To ask the Postmaster-General if he can see his way to allow as an equivalent to a civil service examination qualification, in the case of ex-soldiers applying for positions in the Sorting Department, Post Office, a first-class Army certificate for education and exemplary conduct.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) It has already been arranged to accept a first-class Army certificate in lieu of the qualifying examination for postmen, and also as evidence of the educational fitness of soldiers who have acquired skill in such a craft as telegraphy. But I do not see my way to go beyond this; and soldiers who possess no such special qualifications must compete in the ordinary way for sorterships or other Post Office appointments recruited by a competitive examination. I may add that concessions as regards age are made to ex-soldiers who are desirous of entering the competitions for sorterships.

Coastguard Stations with a Crew of less than Four Men.

Mr. NIELD (Middlesex, Ealing): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether there are any coatguard stations in the United Kingdom, excluding detachments, with a crew of less than four men; and, if so, will he give a list of them, the location, and the number of men usually, and at the present time, stationed at each respectively.

(*Answered by Dr. Macnamara.*) There are fourteen such stations, as follows—

Division.	Station.	Complement.	Number of men at present time.
Hull - - - -	Stone Creek - -	3	3
	Paull - - -	3	3
	Tetney Lock -	3	3
Lynn - - - -	Wrangle - -	3	3
Ilfracombe - - -	Appledore - -	3	3
Swansea - - - -	Porthcawl - -	3	3
Liverpool - - - -	Walney Island -	3	3
North Queensferry - -	Inchkeith - -	3	3
	Fifeness - -	3	3
Banff - - - -	Rosehearty - -	3	3
Inverness - - - -	Dunnet Head -	3	3
Galway - - - -	Renmore - -	3	3
Guidore - - - -	Arranmore - -	3	3
Rathmullen - - -	Fanad Head - -	3	3

Mr. NIELD: To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether, in the opinion of the Board of Admiralty, any coastguard station, other than detachments, can be considered efficient which has less than four men constituting its crew, having regard to emergencies and services arising from storm and wrecks which the coastguard are called upon to undertake.

(*Answered by Dr. Macnamara.*) The Answer is in the affirmative.

Importation of British Cattle into Canada.

Mr. WATT (Glasgow, College): To ask the Secretary for Scotland whether it is the case that the Canadian Government have in contemplation the prohibition of the importation of breeding stock from Scotland on account of the recent outbreak of disease in Edinburgh; and, if so, will he introduce legislation permitting the free entry of Canadian cattle into this country, so as to prevent the above misfortune.

(*Answered by Sir Edward Strachey.*) As my hon. friend is probably aware, foot-and-mouth disease no longer exists in this country, and all the restrictions rendered necessary in consequence of the recent outbreaks have been withdrawn. In these circumstances we have no reason to believe that the Canadian Government will consider it necessary to modify in any way the existing arrangements with regard to the introduction of British stock into the Dominion. No legislation is in contemplation so far as we are concerned.

Rules under Section 15 (3) Land Law (Ireland), Act 1887.

MR. FETHERSTONHAUGH (Fermanagh, N.): To ask Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland whether any rules were made, and, if so, when, under Section 15, Sub-section 3, of the Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1887, regulating the terms on which consents to the redemption of quit rents in Ireland should be given; when, and by whom, was the rule stated on page 422 of Cherry's Irish Land Acts altered; and what are the rules on the subject at present in force, and are the same accessible to the public.

(*Answered by Mr. Hobhouse.*) It has not been found necessary to make rules under the section quoted with regard to the redemption of quit, etc., rents, and the statement on page 422 of Cherry's Irish Land Acts is not accurate if it is meant to convey more than that it was at that time the practice of the Commissioners of Woods to sell such rents at twenty-five years purchase. There are no statutory rules governing the rate at which quit rents are sold. This rate is fixed by the Commissioner of Woods with the authority of the Treasury.

Ecclesiastical Commissioners and Compensation for Non-Renewal of Leases.

SIR RANDAL CREMER (Shoreditch, Haggerston): To ask the hon. Member for the Crewe Division, as Ecclesiastical Commissioner, whether the Commissioners, when refusing to renew leases of their property, are under any statutory obligation to compensate publicans, shopkeepers, manufacturers, or any other persons, who may be doing a profitable business, at the expiration of their leases; and if they are under no statutory obligation to do so, whether it is customary for the Commissioners voluntarily to compensate those whose business may suffer or be ruined by the non-renewal of their leases.

(*Answered by Mr. Tomkinson.*) The Commissioners are under no statutory obligation of the nature referred to, being in the same position as any other absolute owners of real property, and it is not their practice to compensate lessees for the non-renewal of their leases.

Criminal Procedure Bill.

MR. YOUNGER (Ayr Burghs): To ask the Lord-Advocate whether he is aware of the wide-spread desire for the re-introduction of the Criminal Procedure Bill; whether the Bill is prepared; and, if so, when he proposes to introduce it.

(*Answered by Mr. Thomas Shaw.*) From various communications which have reached me I gather that there is a general desire in Scotland to see this Bill passed into law. The Bill is in a very forward state of preparation, and I am endeavouring to give effect to valuable suggestions on points of detail which have reached me from various quarters. I hope to introduce it on an early date.

River Shannon Tolls.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he is aware that the tolls payable to the Treasury on boats and barges navigating the River Shannon roughly amount to an average charge of £2 per cargo per boat, and that the boats paying these tolls are engaged in carrying food-stuffs and other necessaries of life to one of the poorest districts in Ireland; and whether, in view of the charge of 5s. per steamer which the Treasury proposes to make for the use of the Carlisle pier at Kingstown by the London and North-Western Railway Company, he will at least assimilate the payments exacted from the boats navigating the Shannon to a maximum of 5s. per boat.

(*Answered by Mr. Hobhouse.*) The Board of Works inform me that according to the figures available in that Department the average tolls paid on each trip of a boat with cargo on the Shannon Navigation work out at 16s. 4d. The rate of 5s. in Kingstown Harbour does not, however, apply to ships with cargo, but only to ships carrying mails or passengers exclusively.

Revenue Derived from Alcohol.

Mr. PIKE PEASE (Darlington): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer what is the amount of revenue, including both Customs and Excise, derived from alcohol during the last twenty years.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George*).

Statement showing the Total Net Amount of Customs and Excise Revenue derived from Alcohol in the United Kingdom in each of the twenty years ended 31st March, 1907:—

Year ended 31st March.	Excise.*	Customs †	Total.
	£	£	£
1888	21,739,737	5,320,969	27,060,706
1889	21,649,448	5,519,864	27,169,312
1890	23,270,428	5,997,058	29,267,486
1891	25,255,684	6,030,776	31,286,460
1892	26,332,021	5,948,150	32,280,171
1893	25,889,640	5,572,577	31,462,217
1894	25,884,958	5,557,407	31,442,365
1895	26,496,028	5,552,106	32,048,134
1896	27,510,988	5,693,424	33,204,412
1897	28,136,842	5,841,868	33,978,710
1898	29,045,035	5,853,259	34,898,294
1899	30,052,964	5,860,833	35,913,797
1900	32,648,297	6,885,602	39,533,899
1901	34,064,539	6,502,884	40,567,423
1902	32,209,217	6,266,330	38,475,547
1903	32,739,308	6,494,714	39,234,022
1904	32,129,099	6,022,076	38,151,175
1905	31,237,390	5,206,389	36,444,279
1906	30,748,228	5,095,370	35,843,598
1907	30,816,057	5,480,917	36,296,974

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* Including Local Taxation Amounts from 1890–1 upwards.

† Including Local Taxation Amounts, but excluding appropriations to the Isle of Man.

Dairies, Cowsheds, and Milkshops (Ireland) Order — Suggested Government Grant.

Mr. BARRIE (Londonderry, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, having regard to the fact that the Dairies, Cowsheds, and Milkshops (Ireland) Order, 1908, is compulsory, and that its provisions are for the purpose of improving the general health of the community and assisting to stamp out the disease of tuberculosis, he will urge upon the Government the necessity of contributing one-half of the cost of giving effect to the Order.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The Answer is in the negative. There is no reason why the Government should contribute one half of the cost of giving effect to the Order in question that would not equally apply to the case of every Order which aims at improving the general health of the community.

Distribution of Grazing Land at Cookesboro' and Killulagh.

Mr. LONSDALE (Armagh, Mid.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Estates Commissioners have arranged terms for the purchase of grazing lands at Cookesboro' and Killulagh; and whether, in the distribution of these lands, all persons who have been found or are known to have taken part in cattle-driving will be excluded from any share in the property.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The Estates Commissioners are negotiating for the purchase of untenanted lands on the Pakenham and Fetherstonhaugh estates at the places named, but at the present stage of the proceedings it would be premature to consider to whom the lands will be re-sold if purchased. The Commissioners will duly consider any representations which may be made to them in the matter.

Division of the Estate of Captain Carden at Barnane.

Mr. LONSDALE: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that in the division of the estate of Captain Carden, at Barnane, Templemore, by the Estates Commissioners, all the farms have been allotted to officials of the United Irish League and their supporters; and whether he can offer any explanation why independent applicants, thoroughly suitable and living nearer to the estate, have been excluded from a share of these lands.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The Estates Commissioners are not aware that the facts are as suggested in the Question. The Commissioners have not informed themselves of the political views of the persons to whom they propose to allot parcels of the Carden estate, nor have they taken any such matters into consideration.

Condition of Roads in County Leitrim.

Mr. LONSDALE: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the condition of the roads in County Leitrim; and whether he will inquire how far this is due to a system of giving contracts to sons of county councillors and district councillors who reside at home with their fathers and work their fathers' horses in these contracts.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The attention of the Local Government Board has been called to the inferior condition of the roads in County Leitrim, but while the Board consider that the county council would effect great economy and improvements by adopting direct labour instead of the contract system, they are not prepared to assume that the sons of local councillors are less competent as contractors than other persons. In the Board's opinion it is the contract system, rather than the personnel of the contractors, which is at fault.

Alleged Assault by Constables at Attymass, County Mayo.

Mr. SHEEHY (Meath, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that, on 15th March, Constable Donovan and another policeman, in Attymass, County Mayo, followed two girls, Mrs. Dowd's daughter and her companion Kate Judge, into Mrs. Dowd's house and beat the girls in Mrs. Dowd's presence, knocking down Kate Judge with violence and cutting her hand; and what punishment, if any, has been inflicted on these guardians of the peace for such conduct.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The two policemen referred to in the Question deny that there is any truth in the statement that they beat or in any way assaulted these two girls in Mrs. O'Dowd's house as alleged. They were summoned by the girls for assault, and the complaints were heard at Petty Sessions on the 7th instant, when the magistrates dismissed both cases on the merits. The Inspector-General considers that there was nothing in the conduct of the policemen which calls for any action on his part.

Evicted Tenants—Application of Frank Chambers.

MR. O'DOWD (Sligo, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Estates Commissioners have received an application for reinstatement from Frank Chambers, whose father was evicted some thirty years ago on the McCloughry estate, situate in the district of Ballyrush, near Riverstown, Ballymote, County Sligo; and, if so, what steps they propose to take in the matter.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The Estates Commissioners have received the application referred to, but as the eviction took place more than twenty-five years before the passing of the Act of 1903 they can take no action in the matter.

Evicted Tenants—Case of Mary Cryan.

MR. O'DOWD: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Estates Commissioners have inquired into the case of Mary Cryan, evicted tenant on the estate lately owned by Major Phibbs, and which is situated in Mullinabreena, near Tubbercurry, County Sligo; and, if so, whether, as this estate is now vested in the Estates Commissioners, and as the present occupier is endeavouring to dispose of the evicted farm by private treaty, steps will be taken to have Mary Cryan reinstated in the holding from which she was evicted eleven years ago.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The Estates Commissioners have inquired into this case and have decided that they cannot take any action in it. The applicant was not evicted by the landlord, but by her brother-in-law, as the result apparently of a family dispute. It is not the case that the Commissioners have purchased the estate in question.

Dillon Estate—Cardenstown Farm.

MR. SHEEHY: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Cardenstown farm, on the Dillon estate, County Meath, is being bought by the Estates Commissioners for the purpose of distribution.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The Estates Commissioners are unable to identify any proceedings for the sale of this farm as having been instituted before them.

Evicted Tenants—Case of Mrs. Ellen Barry.

MR. REDDY (King's County, Birr): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that Mrs. Ellen Barry, an evicted tenant of Armagh, County Tipperary, has applied to the Estates Commissioners for reinstatement; and, as her holding is in the hands of the landlord, can he state what prospect there is of her being reinstated.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The Estates Commissioners have received an application for reinstatement from Mrs. Ellen Barry, but cannot say whether they will be able to take any action upon it until the estate upon which the evicted holding is situate comes before them for sale. The application was received after 31st May last.

Reinstatement of Evicted Tenants in County Kerry.

MR. THOMAS O'DONNELL (Kerry, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state how many evicted tenants in the County of Kerry have been reinstated under the provisions of the Evicted Tenants Act; how many applications have been received from evicted tenants in the county; how many have been reinstated by landlords and how many by the Estates Commissioners; and what steps have been taken to test the merits of each particular application.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The Estates Commissioners have taken proceedings for the compulsory acquisition under the Evicted Tenants Act of certain lands in County Kerry, but no reinstatements have yet been made under the Act in that county; 938 applications have been received from the county, 209 evicted tenants have been reinstated on estates sold by landlords to tenants direct, and 38 evicted tenants have been reinstated by the Commissioners on estates purchased by them. The applications of evicted tenants are fully inquired into by inspectors, whose reports are considered by the Commissioners together with all other available information.

Evicted Tenants—Case of Mrs. Alice Nagle.

MR. WILLIAM ABRAHAM (Cork County, N.E.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state whether the Estates Commissioners have given further consideration to the claim of Mrs. Alice Nagle for reinstatement in her former holding at Ballinabollisk, on the Leader estate, county Cork; and whether, seeing that the present occupier of the farm only entered into possession of it in 1902, and that the sale and purchase of the estate, as a whole, is now being proceeded with, the Commissioners will consider the desirability of taking steps to ascertain the terms upon which the present occupier would be willing to give up possession of the farm to Mrs. Alice Nagle.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The Estates Commissioners have decided that Mrs. Alice Nagle is a fit person to be provided with a holding if one can be found for her, and they have referred the case to their inspector with the object of providing a holding if possible.

Garrison Churches in India—Exclusive use claimed by Church of England.

MR. DUNDAS WHITE: To ask the Secretary of State for India if he can say what is the number of the garrison churches in India, built wholly or in part with public moneys, of which the Church of England claims the legal right to the exclusive use, basing that claim on the fact of consecration alone; where these churches are situated; and what, as regards each of them, were the approximate dates of the buildings, the consecration, and the assertion of the claim to such exclusive use.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Morley.*) I regret that I have not the material to enable me to answer this Question in detail, but I am making further inquiry. Meanwhile I venture to refer my hon. friend to the Memorandum laid before Parliament before Easter. Generally it may be said that all military stations (except possibly some recently established) have a garrison church; that at all old-established stations this church was consecrated many years ago, and that the act of consecration at the request or with the permission of the Government of India, and the contract implied thereby, is the basis of the claim of the Bishop to control the use of the edifice for religious purposes.

Confidential Reports in the Post Office.

MR. W. T. WILSON (Lancashire, Westhoughton): To ask the Postmaster-General if his attention has been called to the practice of secret reporting in the case of an officer of irreproachable character of the Eastern Central section of the General Post Office for an alleged offence which he emphatically denies, in which no explanation was asked for of the alleged misconduct until nearly a month after it is said to have occurred; and whether he will cause inquiry to be made into the circumstances of the case, and, in view of the abuses which such delay is likely to give rise to, will he give instructions for all officers who have serious charges made against them to have a copy of such charges supplied to them at the time they are alleged to be committed, that they may at once have an opportunity of tendering an explanation.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) The facts of the case to which I understand the hon. Member to refer have been more than once brought to my notice, and I am satisfied that no injustice was done to the officer in question. It is the usual practice to ask for an explanation of misconduct without delay; but cases may from time to time arise in which an interval occurs between the time of the commission of an offence and the request for a written explanation.

Sanitary Arrangements in Tenement Houses.

MR. HORNIMAN (Chelsea): To ask the President of the Local Government Board whether his attention has been called to the fact that many houses built for the occupation of one family only are constantly let in tenements without any provision being made for proper sanitary accommodation for the same or an adequate water supply; whether he is aware that in many cases the only sanitary accommodation for four or more families is situated on the ground floor, sometimes in the back yard, and water can only be procured from one tap in the basement or on the ground floor; and whether he proposes to take any action by legislation or otherwise to deal with this state of things.

(*Answered by Mr. John Burns.*) I am aware that as regards houses originally built for the occupation of one family, but subsequently let in tenements, evils of the kind mentioned in the Question are apt to arise. The existing law confers on local authorities considerable powers for dealing with such cases, as, *e.g.*, outside London the power of making bye-laws under Section 90 of the Public Health Act, 1875, as to houses let in lodgings or occupied by members of more than one family, and in London the power given by Section 37 of The Public Health (London) Act, 1891, as to sanitary accommodation, and the provision in Section 78 of the London County Council (General Powers) Act, 1907, as to the supply of water to tenement houses. I will, however, cause the suggestion for further legislation on the subject to be noted.

Reinforced Concrete Structures and Building Loans.

SIR J. BRUNNER (Cheshire, Northwich): To ask the President of the Local Government Board whether in view of the fact that several Government Departments have adopted the method of building in reinforced concrete, with a resultant large economy and no loss in efficiency, he proposes to persist in requiring from local authorities a shorter term for the repayment of loans for buildings in reinforced concrete than for buildings in the old-fashioned method.

(*Answered by Mr. John Burns.*) As I have stated before, I am advised that it is doubtful whether ferro-concrete is a suitable material for permanent structural works under all conditions, and that there is need for caution in dealing with it. Examples have been brought under my notice of the failure of works constructed of this material. There has not been sufficient experience in connection with this matter to enable me to arrive at a definite conclusion with regard to the economy and efficiency of buildings constructed with ferro-concrete, and I am still not satisfied that the periods allowed for the repayment of loans for work so constructed can properly be extended.

Military and Naval Prisons--Prisoners and Staff.

MR. BELLAIRS: To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he is aware that, from Answers to Questions circulated on 21st August, 1907, it appears that on an occasion in 1906–7 there was only one prisoner in the military prison at Hong Kong with an establishment of four to look after him, and five prisoners in the naval prison with an establishment of eight to look after them, and at the Cape of Good Hope the numbers were, on occasion, establishments of eleven and five to look after twenty-one and no prisoners respectively; and whether, while making every allowance for the larger number of prisoners that may be under punishment at other times, the Treasury will ascertain if there is ample accommodation in the military prisons for naval prisoners, having regard as well to past precedent in these matters.

To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he is aware that there are separate naval and military prisons at Hong Kong, and again at Simon's Bay and Wynburg, which are within easy communication of each other; and whether steps can be taken to induce the Admiralty and War Office to cut down expenses by maintaining a single establishment at each place.

(*Answered by Mr. Hobhouse.*) With regard to Hong Kong, the revision of the naval prison arrangements at that place is already under consideration. We are not prepared to abolish the naval prison at Simon's Bay, as the present system is necessary to meet the requirements of the service.

Exchequer Contributions to Herefordshire County Council.

CAPTAIN CLIVE (Herefordshire, Ross): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will state why the Exchequer contribution to the County Council of Herefordshire during the last financial year was less by £2,150 than in the year ending the 31st March, 1907.

(*Answered by Mr. John Burns.*) My right hon. friend has asked me to reply to this Question. At the time when arrangements were being made by the Local Government Board for the payment to the councils of counties and county boroughs of the instalment which was distributed last month, on account of the financial year, 1907–8, out of the sums payable into the Local Taxation Account, as the equivalent of the proceeds of the local taxation licence duties and the estate duty grant, it was found that the amount available for distribution was appreciably less than the amount available at the corresponding period of the previous year. In the circumstances, the councils were generally paid the same sums that they received in March, 1906, on account of the financial year, 1905–6. In the case of Herefordshire, however, the produce of the local taxation licence duties during the eleven months ended February, 1908, was about £460 less than in the corresponding period of 1905–6, and therefore, in that case, the sum paid was rather less than in March, 1906. In the result the payment made to the county council in March, 1908, was £2,150 less than in March, 1907. A final payment remains to be made to the councils on the same account in respect of the year 1907–8; and the latest returns as to the proceeds of the duties for the year point to the probability that in the case of the county of Hereford this final payment will be somewhat larger than the corresponding payment made on account of the year 1906–7.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Naval Engine Room Artificers.

MR. SUMMERBELL (Sunderland): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty how many candidates from outside sources have been examined for the rating of fourth-class engine-room artificer since 1st April, 1907, and what percentage passed into His Majesty's service.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. MCKENNA, Monmouth, N.): 252 candidates have been examined from outside sources; and about 56 per cent. passed into the service.

H.M.S. "Indus" Mechanicians.

MR. SUMMERBELL: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty what rearrangement of the mechanician establishment on H.M.S. "Indus" has taken place since 1st January, 1908; what circumstances entailed the alteration; and will it facilitate means for obtaining the cost of training.

MR. MCKENNA: No rearrangement has taken place since the 1st January, 1908. The change to which the Hon. Member probably refers had to do with the workshops in "Indus I.", which ship, though forming part of the "Indus" establishment, is in no way connected with the mechanician part of it.

Officers of H.M.S. "Indus."

MR. SUMMERBELL: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether additions are to be made to the number of officers on the books of H.M.S. "Indus" on 1st January, 1908; and, if so, for what duties will they be borne.

MR. MCKENNA: Two officers now borne on the books of the "Vivid" for duties connected with the repairs of small craft, etc., will probably be transferred to the books of the "Indus" without change of duties.

Engine-Room Artificers and Mechanicians.

Mr. SUMMERBELL: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty how many engine-room artificers have been supplanted by mechanicians since the inauguration of the latter rating; and will the basis laid down for this change in Circular Letter No. 91, of 26th July, 1907, be inserted in the recruiting bills issued for public guidance.

Mr. McKENNA: No engine-room artificers have been supplanted in the service by mechanicians, but the numbers of engine-room artificers hereafter required will be less by 40, approximately; on account of the mechanicians now serving afloat. No reason is seen for inserting the provisions of Circular Letter No. 91 of the 26th July, 1907, in recruiting handbills.

Mechanician Rating Qualifications.

Mr. BOWERMAN (Deptford): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty what reduction in the qualifications for the rating of mechanician have been necessitated by the dearth of candidates; and how it is proposed to make up a sufficient number of men for the next mechanician course.

Mr. McKENNA: No reduction has been made in the qualifications required for the rating of mechanician. It is anticipated that there will be a full supply of volunteers when the new rules are in full working order; but in the meantime, the standard of the preliminary examination to be passed afloat, prior to selection of candidates for the mechanician course, has been slightly relaxed.

Submarine Service.

Mr. BOWERMAN: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty what is the maximum period of service allotted for engine-room artificers and chief petty officers, respectively, in submarine service; are any exceptions made to the rule; and if so, for what reason.

Mr. McKENNA: As a rule, continuous service in submarines is not to exceed five years. A few exceptions have been allowed, *e.g.*, where the men were required for special experimental and instructional work. The maximum total service is eight years.

Pensioners on Home Service Ships.

Mr. BOWERMAN: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty if he will state to what extent it is proposed to substitute pensioners for active service ratings in Home-service ships; do these men receive full pay and pension whilst serving; and is the engagement for a period of five years only.

Mr. McKENNA: Pensioners are employed in certain stationary home establishments, such as barracks and training establishments. The extent to which this system will be authorised cannot be stated, as it depends on the varying requirements of the establishments, but it is practically limited by the duties which can be more economically and suitably carried out by pensioners than by active service ratings. They receive a weekly wage according to the nature of the work on which they are employed, in addition to their pensions. There is no period of engagement.

Shipbuilding Dispute.

Mr. HUDSON (Newcastle-on-Tyne): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty if his attention has been called to the threatened closing of shipbuilding yards where there is no dispute at present pending between employers and employed; whether any Government contract is likely to be delayed in consequence; and, in the event of any delay on the part of any contracting firm, what action, if any, he proposes to take with regard to the matter.

Mr. McKENNA: I have read the Press reports on the subject of a possible lock-out in the near future. Contracts for building Government ships provide that the contractor shall immediately, on the occurrence of a lock-out, give notice thereof to the Admiralty. No such notice has yet been received. Should any lock-out occur the execution of certain Government contracts will, in all probability, be delayed. Delay has already been caused in some Government contracts by strikes. The question of taking action is under consideration.

Mr. CURRAN (Durham, Jarrow): Can no definite action be taken against firms holding Government contracts who lock out their men?

MR. MCKENNA: That is one of the points under consideration.

Inquiry into Personnel and Training of the Royal Navy.

MR. BELLAIRS (Lynn Regis): I beg to ask the First of Lord the Admiralty whether he is aware that over 220 Members of Parliament have presented a memorial in favour of an inquiry into the scope and effects of the changes made in 1903, and subsequently in the organisation and training of the *personnel* of the Royal Navy, which has been the subject of adverse representations from many distinguished naval officers; and whether he will make a statement in reference to this matter on Vote 5 of the Navy Estimates.

MR. MCKENNA: I understand that the memorial was presented to the late Prime Minister. From inquiry, I learn that Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman did not think it desirable that any action should be taken on the memorial. The present Board of Admiralty have no intention of departing from the policy approved by successive Boards since 1903.

Torpedo Boats in the Hamble River.

MR. ASHLEY (Lancashire, Blackpool): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether it is proposed to moor a number of torpedo boats in Hamble River, and so practically close this river to other shipping; whether he is aware that this river is the only safe and convenient harbour for small vessels in the Solent which is accessible at all states of the tide, and is used by a large number of yachts and other vessels; that a large proportion of the residents in Hamble, Swanwick, and Bursledon gain their livelihood owing to the presence of these vessels; and that a grave loss would be inflicted on the neighbourhood should these ships be compelled to go elsewhere; and whether he will give a favourable consideration to the petition which is being forwarded to him from the places affected by this proposal.

MR. MCKENNA: It is not proposed so to moor torpedo craft in Hamble River as to prevent that river being used by other small craft, and it is not believed that there is any ground for supposing that loss will be inflicted on the residents in the locality. The intended arrangement is a temporary one during the construction of the dock at Portsmouth. Any particular representation from the places affected will receive careful consideration.

MR. ASHLEY: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that in this river there is practically no room for other ships when torpedo-boats are there?

MR. MCKENNA: I am not aware of it. I will inquire.

MR. ARTHUR LEE (Hampshire, Fareham): Will the right hon. Gentleman defer taking any definite steps until he has seen the extensively-signed petition from the district?

MR. MCKENNA: I cannot undertake to do that.

Naval Cordite Reserves.

MR. BELLAIRS: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether the official assurance that the reserves of cordite for each class of gun is at least as great as it was on 1st January, 1907, excludes from consideration all cordite which is suspected of containing mercuric chloride; and whether it is proposed to reissue any of the cordite now at the depots which contains mercuric chloride.

MR. MCKENNA: The Answer to the first part of the Question is in the affirmative. Cordite containing mercuric chloride will probably be used for practice purposes.

MR. MYER (Lambeth, N.): In view of the difficulty of obtaining unadulterated cordite will the Admiralty and the War Office take steps to manufacture their own?

MR. MCKENNA: That is a large Question, of which I should like notice.

MR. BELLAIRS: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether he is aware that, on 25th February, Lord Rayleigh's Committee of War Office, Home Office, and independent experts on explosives unanimously recommended the destruction of all the new blasting explosives containing the unlawful ingredient mercuric chloride; whether, in view of this decisive action, he can state what course the Admiralty Committee under Lord Rayleigh recommended in reference to cordite containing this unlawful ingredient which might be found afloat in any warships or in the ordnance depots; and whether all cordite containing mercuric chloride has now been withdrawn from afloat to the ordnance depots while awaiting the results of the War Office experiments as to whether it can safely be used.

Mr. McKENNA: Lord Rayleigh's Committee did not deal with cordite already in the naval service; and the recommendation my hon. friend refers to applied only to blasting explosives seized by the Home Office. The Admiralty have already taken all necessary steps to deal with such naval cordite as may be found to contain mercuric chloride.

Lord R. CECIL (Marylebone, E.): Does the right hon. Gentleman mean he has taken steps to destroy this cordite?

Mr. McKENNA: The Admiralty have taken the necessary steps to secure them against danger.

Lord R. CECIL: Is there still some of this cordite containing mercuric chloride on board any vessels?

Mr. McKENNA asked for notice.

Mr. BELLAIRS: That is the Question I asked.

Mr. McKENNA repeated his original Answer, adding that the Admiralty were quite satisfied there was no danger.

Mr. BELLAIRS: Has this cordite been withdrawn from ships afloat?

[No Answer was returned.]

Cordite Silver Test.

Mr. BELLAIRS: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether he is aware that the new silver test for cordite is one requiring special laboratory conditions, and taking about 2,000 hours with a liquid bath kept at a uniform temperature of 80° C. in the case of each sample; and whether, under these circumstances, the test can be usefully applied on board ship or to more than very small quantities of cordite.

Mr. McKENNA: It is not proposed to carry out silver tests on board ships, all cordite tests being carried out at the depots; but my hon. friend is mistaken in supposing that it would not be practicable to do so.

Mr. BELLAIRS: Does the right hon. Gentleman dispute my figures as to the duration of the test?

Mr. McKENNA: Yes, Sir.

Lord R. CECIL: Will the right hon. Gentleman lay on the Table a Return explaining the test and the number of hours it takes?

Mr. McKENNA: No, sir.

Bisley Class Firing Accident.

Sir GILBERT PARKER (Gravesend): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if he will now state whether it is intended to give increased compensation to George Bishop, quartermaster-sergeant of the 2nd Volunteer Battalion Royal Fusiliers, who was offered £4 18s. for an injury received at class firing at Bisley from a defective cartridge which exploded in the chamber, carrying away the locking-piece and part of the shoulder of the rifle, lacerating three of Quartermaster-Sergeant Bishop's fingers and destroying the drum of the right ear, permanently injuring the hearing and necessitating medical attendance at a payment of 2s. a week as an out-patient of the Ear Hospital, Golden Square; and whether he is aware that Quartermaster-Sergeant Bishop lost his situation on 31st August last, owing to the effects of the injury received, and that he and his wife and six children have been more or less dependent on charity during the last six months.

The SECRETARY of STATE for WAR (Mr. Haldane, Haddington): A gratuity has been awarded to Quartermaster-Sergeant Bishop in accordance with the regulations for the period during which he was certified to be unable to follow his employment. The General Officer Commanding was instructed in November to submit the case with a view to the consideration of a further grant for the cost of medical treatment when the man's attendance at Golden Square Hospital has been completed. No mention was made by the man or his commanding officer in the course of the correspondence in October that the man had lost his situation on 31st August owing to the effects of that injury. I have directed that further inquiry be made into this case.

Sir GILBERT PARKER: If it is found that the facts are as stated, will the Department give a further grant?

Mr. HALDANE: I will ascertain the facts first.

Messrs. Kynoch and Cordite.

Mr. BELLAIRS: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if he will state how many tons of new cordite Kynoch, Limited, refuse to take back; whether all this cordite has been found to contain mercuric chloride; and whether any inconvenience is caused through the quantity of rejected cordite now occupying magazine space.

Mr. HALDANE: This firm refuse to take back seventy-three tons of cordite, all of which is found to contain mercuric chloride. As far as Army magazines are concerned, no inconvenience as regards storage has been experienced up to the present. Litigation is pending on the subject.

Lord R. CECIL: Is the cordite containing mercuric chloride stored in the ordinary magazines, where, if it exploded, it would do harm?

Mr. HALDANE asked for notice of the Question.

Mr. BELLAIRS: Are the magazines for naval ammunition still in the right hon. Gentleman's charge?

Mr. HALDANE asked for notice of the Question.

Re-issues of Cordite.

Mr. BELLAIRS: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether any of the cordite containing mercuric chloride has been re-issued from the ordnance depots to forts or ships of war since the active investigations undertaken in the early part of last year; and whether cordite containing mercuric chloride is regarded as part of the reserve or general stock.

Mr. HALDANE: As far as the land service is concerned if any such cordite has for any reason been returned to a depot it is being re-issued subject to satisfying a searching test. The reply to the latter part of the Question is in the affirmative. As the hon. and gallant Member has already been informed, all cordite is subjected to periodic tests of stability.

Rioting in South India.

Mr. REES (Montgomery Boroughs): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether he can give any information regarding the recent rioting in South India; and whether it was connected with celebrations of the release of Babu Bepin Chandra Pal, the Congress orator, and was part of a Swaraj agitation.

I beg also to ask the Secretary of State for India whether he can give the House any information regarding the recent riots at Tuticorin and Tinnevelly.

The UNDER-SECRETARY of STATE for INDIA (Mr. Buchanan, Perthshire, E.): I will answer the hon. Member's two Questions on this subject together. The Secretary of State has received Reports of the occurrences referred to. At Tuticorin a meeting of about 2,000 persons was held on 13th March in defiance of an order issued by the magistrate, who had reason to fear a breach of the peace. In endeavouring to disperse the meeting, the magistrate and deputy-superintendent of police were stoned by the mob, who finally had to be fired on. Little damage was done. Some rioters were wounded, but none were killed. One police-officer was seriously injured, and has since been reported dead. At Tinnevelly on the same day a mob threw stones, broke lamps, and set fire to public buildings.

The magistrate was unable to disperse the crowd, and was eventually obliged to order the police to fire. One rioter was killed, and seven wounded, of whom two are reported to have died. The rioting was connected with the celebration of the release of Bepin Chandra Pal and with a Swaraj agitation. The action of the authorities seems to show no excess of force under the circumstances, which I do not doubt have been correctly reported.

Dr. RUTHERFORD (Middlesex, Brentford): Is it not the case that meetings of congratulation upon the return from prison of Bipin Chandra Pal passed off peacefully throughout India with the exception of Tinnevelly and Tuticorin, where the authorities prohibited the holding of public meetings; and that it was this prohibition that led to rioting and loss of innocent life?

Mr. BUCHANAN: I must ask for notice of that Question.

Bengal Government Finance.

Sir H. COTTON (Nottingham, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether he is aware that, in the Budget statement of the Government of Eastern Bengal and Assam, the deficit of the current year is stated to amount to 23½ lakhs of rupees, and the deficit in the year 1908–9 is estimated to amount to 45¾ lakhs of rupees; and whether, having regard to the unforeseen additional expenditure involved in the administration of the new province, he will consider the advisability of modifying the partition of Bengal with special reference to the appointment of a governor and council for the whole of Bengal, in accordance with the intention of the Government of India Act of 1833 and the subsequent Statute of 1853, 16 and 17 Vict., c. 95, and the delegation of powers to certain local authorities corresponding to those which, under the Indian Act of 1868, obtain in Sind, as was suggested by his predecessor in office.

Mr. BUCHANAN: The figures quoted by the hon. Member are not quite accurate. The "deficit" (that is to say the reduction of provincial balance) in 1907–8, to which he presumably refers in speaking of the "current year," is estimated at 21½ lakhs, not 23½, and that in 1908–9 at 23½ lakhs, not 45¾. The reduction of the provincial balance in the two years is chiefly due to the expenditure of the special grant made to the Provincial Government in 1906–7 to provide for the government buildings required at the capital of the new province. The expenditure is, of course, of a temporary and non-recurring character, and cannot be regarded as a reason for so serious and far-reaching a measure as modifying the whole administrative arrangements of the province.

Sir H. COTTON: Is it the fact that the expenditure on the new province exceeds by many lakhs of rupees that which was estimated when the partition was decided upon?

Mr. BUCHANAN: I do not think so. There has been a special expenditure which will cease in a short time, but provision was made for it and it was fully anticipated.

The Amir of Afghanistan and the Anglo-Russian Convention.

Mr. LYNCH (Yorkshire, W.R., Ripon): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether the Amir of Afghanistan has notified his consent to the Articles of the Anglo-Russian Convention concerning Afghanistan; whether these Articles will have any validity in case the consent of the Amir should not be forthcoming; and whether he can inform the House why the Amir of Afghanistan is not referred to in the Convention by the title of His Majesty, this being the title given to the Amir in the Treaty between Great Britain and Afghanistan, signed at Kabul on 21st March, 1905.

Mr. BUCHANAN: I would refer my hon. friend to the Answer given on the 14th instant to a similar Question by the hon. Member for the St. Andrews District. It would serve no useful purpose to discuss the hypothetical case contemplated by the Question. The Convention does not profess to give the full title of His Majesty the Amir as recited in the Treaty of 21st March, 1905.

Mr. LYNCH: The hon. Gentleman has not answered the second part of my Question.

Mr. BUCHANAN: I said it would serve no useful purpose to discuss a hypothetical case.

Mr. SMEATON (Stirlingshire): Has the Amir given his consent to the Convention?

Mr. BUCHANAN: I have answered that by referring the hon. Gentleman to a previous Answer.

Sir H. COTTON: Has the consent yet been given?

Mr. BUCHANAN: Not yet.

Mr. SMEATON: And is that a matter of surprise in view of the humiliating position in which the Amir has been placed?

*Mr. SPEAKER: That is a matter of opinion.

Indian Whipping Act.

Sir H. COTTON: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether his attention has been drawn to the fact that the Bill to amend the Whipping Act, which has been introduced into the Council of the Governor General of India, does not provide that no whipping shall be inflicted by order of a Court unless and until the person convicted has had a reasonable opportunity of carrying his case before a Court of Appeal; and whether he will suggest to the Government of India the advisability of introducing a clause in the Bill to this effect.

Mr. BUCHANAN: It would be impossible to provide for an appeal while maintaining the penalty of whipping as an alternative to imprisonment, since, pending appeal, the prisoner would have to be retained in custody. The object in view has been met by providing that only experienced officers, exercising first-class powers, shall be authorised to inflict the penalty.

Sir H. COTTON: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether in the Whipping Act Amendment Bill, introduced into the Council of the Governor General of India on 13th March, the punishment of whipping for larceny has been abolished; and, if so, whether he will take steps to prohibit flogging as a punishment for casual and ordinary theft.

Mr. BUCHANAN: The punishment of whipping for casual and ordinary theft has not been abolished by the Bill, and the Secretary of State does not propose to take any steps in the matter.

Stone-Throwing in Calcutta—Magistrate's Action.

Sir H. COTTON: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether his attention has been drawn to a case decided by the Calcutta police magistrate, Mr. Kingsford, on 12th March, in which a boy, eight or nine years of age, was charged with throwing a stone at a motor-car, which did not strike the motor-car, and was fined £1, and to the request of the magistrate directly addressed to the reporters that it might be stated in the Press that the next time anyone, whoever he was, was brought up on a similar charge he would be punished with whipping, and whether he proposes to take any action in this matter.

Mr. BUCHANAN: The Secretary of State has seen a newspaper report to the effect stated. A practice of stone throwing is said to have grown up lately in Calcutta, and the Secretary of State sees no sufficient reason to interfere.

Sir H. COTTON: Does not the hon. Gentleman think it simply outrageous that a magistrate should threaten small boys with the punishment of flogging for stone-throwing—a very common practice in this country?

Mr. BUCHANAN: I understand the magistrate is quite within his power.

Mr. HAVILAND BURKE (King's County, Tullamore): Is the hon. Gentleman aware that the judicial torture by the infliction of the lash is unknown in the case of any French or native subject in Algeria, and will he use his influence to bring India up to the level of humanity which has obtained so many years in Algeria?

Earl WINTERTON (Sussex, Horsham): Is the hon. Gentleman aware that in France there is considerable agitation to have severely flogged criminals who commit assaults on women and children?

*Mr. SPEAKER: That hardly arises out of the Question on the Paper.

Indian Telegraphists' Strike.

Mr. REES: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether the strike among the telegraph staff in India, which has greatly dislocated business, has ended; and whether the business of the department is now proceeding in the usual course.

Mr. BUCHANAN: The Government of India reported last week that the strike among the telegraph staff in India was at an end, and I understand that the business of the department is proceeding in the usual course.

Mr. REES: May I ask whether this was the outcome of endeavouring to impose English methods on Indian employees?

Mr. BUCHANAN: I do not think so.

Mr. JOHN WARD (Stoke-on-Trent): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for India whether his attention has been called to the discontent of the Indian telegraph operators and signallers with the new scheme of duties introduced by Mr. Newlands, the English expert, who has been lent by the British Post Office to the Indian Administration; and what action, if any, it is proposed to take in the matter.

Mr. BUCHANAN: The discontent of the Indian telegraph operators and signallers with the new scheme of duties has been met by an arrangement under which the new system will have a fair trial for a limited period—four or five weeks I think—and a Committee, on which the subordinate staff will be represented, will be appointed to examine the system during trial. We have every reason to hope that an accommodation will be reached.

Mr. JOHN WARD: Is this the same Mr. Newlands who was the cause of so much difficulty in the Home Post Office?

[No Answer was returned.]

Indian Military Charges.

Mr. LYNCH: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether his attention has been called to a speech recently delivered by Lord Kitchener in the Legislative Council of India to the effect that weighty reasons, affecting the external and internal security of India, militated against any reduction of the military charges; whether he can state the nature of those external reasons; and whether the Government of India contemplate taking any steps towards curtailing the expenditure in connection with the defences of the North-West Frontier as a result of the Anglo-Russian Convention.

Mr. BUCHANAN: The Secretary of State has seen a report, but is engaged in correspondence with the Government of India on the important subject to which my hon. friend refers, and is not able to make any statement at the present stage. Perhaps when the discussion of the Budget comes on in this House I may be able to deal with the points raised by my hon. friend.

Zululand—Sir Duncan Mackenzie's Administration.

Mr. J. M. ROBERTSON (Northumberland, Tyneside): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he will state the number of persons arrested, detained, or placed in prison during the period Sir Duncan Mackenzie administered martial law in Zululand and the northern districts of Natal, and the number left in prison by Sir Duncan Mackenzie, and subsequently discharged by a magistrate, as reported in the official statement of the Under-Secretary.

The UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE for the COLONIES (Colonel Seely, Liverpool, Abercromby): The

Secretary of State is not in possession of this information but has asked the Governor of Natal by telegraph for the particulars desired by my hon. friend.

Intercolonial Reciprocity—Trade Relations of Canada and the West Indies.

MR. LAMONT (Buteshire): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he is aware that, at the Inter-Colonial Conference upon Trade Relations between the West Indies and the Dominion of Canada, held at Barbados in January last, resolutions were passed in favour of a mutual reduction of tariffs as between the Dominion on one hand and certain of the West Indian Colonies on the other; whether the Government regards with favour this movement in the direction of imperial free trade; and, if so, whether the Colonial Office has offered, or will offer, to assist the Crown Colonies concerned in carrying their negotiations to a successful issue.

COLONEL SEELY: We have not yet learned the wishes of the Governments concerned and therefore cannot at present make any definite statement.

MR. LEVERTON HARRIS (Tower Hamlets, Stepney): Will the Secretary of State get the information as soon as possible?

COLONEL SEELY: Yes, Sir; my noble friend is engaged in obtaining it now. My hon. friend will understand that the views of many Governments have to be ascertained and we cannot get an answer immediately.

SIR GILBERT PARKER: Did not the Resolution refer merely to a reduction of tariffs on certain specified articles in both countries to which preference should be given?

COLONEL SEELY: I must ask for notice. I am only aware of the general trend of the matter.

MR. R. DUNCAN (Lanarkshire, Govan): Are the Crown Colonies in a different position from self-governing Colonies in making these arrangements?

COLONEL SEELY: I can hardly deal with that matter in reply to a supplementary Question.

MR. MITCHELL-THOMSON (Lanarkshire, N.W.): Will the hon. Gentleman consider the desirability of laying the correspondence?

COLONEL SEELY: I will consult the Secretary of State on that point.

Case of Mr. Luxenburg.

MR. BELLOC (Salford, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the Russian Government have at any time formulated any definite charge against the British subject, Mr. Luxenburg, recently thrown into prison without trial; and whether, as has been alleged, any close relation of his has, or is accused by the Russian Government of having, plotted against the existing Government of that country.

MR. MITCHELL-THOMSON: At the same time, may I ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the circumstances attending the arrest and imprisonment of Mr. Luxenburg justify a claim for compensation for that gentleman; and whether such a claim has been or will be put forward by the British Government.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir EDWARD GREY, Northumberland, Berwick): I understand that Mr. Luxenburg was notified to the authorities as being engaged in revolutionary propaganda, and was arrested in consequence in a district which was treated as in a state of siege. It turned out apparently that there was no foundation for such a charge, and he was released. But the information I have at present is somewhat vague, and I have asked His Majesty's Ambassador to get more definite information as to the reason for the arrest. I expect to receive a further report from him. I am not aware whether any relation of Mr. Luxenburg has plotted against the Russian Government.

The Aland Islands.

Mr. ASHLEY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether either of the two foreign Powers, parties to the Convention respecting the Aland Islands annexed to the Treaty of Paris in 1856, has proposed to His Majesty's Government that the Convention should be modified; and whether he is aware of any negotiations between these Powers to that end.

Sir EDWARD GREY: I beg to refer the hon. Member to the Answer which I gave to the hon. Member for Mid Armagh on 20th February last. I do not know of any negotiations being in progress, and no alteration of the Aland Islands Treaty is now under discussion as far as I am aware.

*Sir CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if he is now able to state when the Congo further Papers, promised for the earliest possible date, will be laid before the House.

Sir EDWARD GREY: I hope to lay the Congo further Papers next week. They have been somewhat delayed to admit of the inclusion of some additional correspondence.

Sir GILBERT PARKER asked as to the most recent communications which had passed with the Belgian Government.

Sir EDWARD GREY: I understand that my right hon. friend has a Question for Thursday on that point, and I should like to defer my answer till then.

Salonika Memorandum.

Mr. LYNCH: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he can arrange for the communication to the House of the Memorandum by the Adjoints of the Powers at Salonika referred to on page 5 of Turkey, No. 1, 1908

Sir EDWARD GREY: The Memorandum in question will be communicated to the House in a few days, together with other Papers dealing with Macedonia

Brussels Sugar Convention.

Mr. VILLIERS (Brighton): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether His Majesty's Government has agreed to the renewal of the Sugar Convention; and, if so, for what term of years.

Sir EDWARD GREY: The Convention will be renewed from September next for five years. As has been explained in the Papers laid before Parliament, the conditions have been altered so that His Majesty's Government will no longer be required to penalise bounty-fed sugar.

Mr. VILLIERS asked if the supply of sugar from Russia, though no longer prohibited, was limited.

Sir EDWARD GREY said that the position was roughly this: Russia had agreed with the other sugar exporting countries to limit her exports of sugar, though this country was not responsible for seeing that this obligation was carried out.

Mr. VILLIERS: In view of the fact that at the last general election the Sugar Convention was denounced from thousands of Liberal platforms as limiting the supply of sugar to this country——

*Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order! That seems to be a matter for argument.

Forth to Clyde Canal.

Mr. BELLAIRS: I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he is aware that there is practically no gain in time over the open-sea route in passing a large fleet through the proposed Forth to Clyde ship canal owing to the delays of about half an hour at each lock, the slow speed of six knots at which ships can proceed in the dredged section of the canal, and the time required to reassemble at the other end and proceed to destination; and whether, in view of this fact, he will allow the Royal Commission on Canals and Waterways to report with as little delay as possible on measures beneficial to the country without encumbering it with the suggested inquiry into strategical questions connected with the projected Forth to Clyde ship canal, the most favourable estimate as to the cost of which is £17,000,000.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE, Carnarvon Boroughs): I cannot express any opinion as to the suggestions of fact contained in the Question. The Royal Commission will no doubt consider the commercial aspects of this, as of other waterways, but strategical questions do not appear to fall within the scope of their reference.

Wandsworth Prison Warder—Compensation for Injury.

MR. WILES (Islington, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the case of Ernest Taylor, who, while employed as an assistant warder at His Majesty's Prison, Wandsworth, on 10th May, 1904, was during the performance of his duties struck on the head by a prisoner with a sledge-hammer, causing depressed fracture of the skull and completely incapacitating him for twelve months; and, seeing that Taylor is still out of employment owing to this assault, and that no payment whatever has since been made to him, will he recommend that some compensation shall be paid him, as the injury was inflicted during the execution of his duty.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. GLADSTONE, Leeds, W.): This case has been repeatedly considered by the late Home Secretary and myself, and we have found ourselves unable to accept the view of the facts set out in the Question. The evidence does not support the contention that Taylor's present condition is due to any injury inflicted on him while on duty in Wandsworth Prison, and I much regret that no compensation can be offered him from public funds.

Accrington and Nelson Licensing Statistics.

CAPTAIN FABER (Hampshire, Andover): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he can state the respective populations of the towns of Accrington and Nelson, the number of licences per head of the population in each town, and the number of convictions for drunkenness per head in each town.

MR. GLADSTONE: The facts which the hon. Member has in mind are to be found set out on pages 226–7 of the Volume of Licensing Statistics for 1907, as follows:—Accrington: Population, according to Census of 1901, 43,122; on-licences per 10,000 persons on 1st January, 1907, 20·87; convictions for drunkenness per 10,000 persons during the year 1907, 50·09. Nelson: Population, 32,816; on-licences, 4·37; convictions, 49·98.

*MR. JOHN RUTHERFORD (Lancashire, Darwen): How many clubs are there in the town of Nelson?

MR. GLADSTONE: I will ascertain. I have not the figures here.

French Workers and the Workmen's Compensation Act.

MR. STANGER (Kensington, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he can give any estimate of the number of female workpeople, including domestic servants, who, in the United Kingdom, come under the provisions of the Workmen's Compensation Act, 1906; and whether he has placed or is intending to place any duly qualified female medical practitioners on the list of persons to act as medical referees or medical assessors under that Act, so that female workpeople, making claims under the Act, may, where the County Court Judge allows it, have the services of a female medical practitioner.

MR. GLADSTONE: It is estimated that the number of female employees who come within the Act is approximately 3,000,000. The question of appointing women doctors to act as medical referees in cases where women are concerned is one of much administrative difficulty. It has been carefully considered, but I have not seen my way to make any such appointments at present. There were only two references to medical referees in women's cases during the year 1907. I should always be ready to consider an application by a County Court Judge for the *ad hoc* appointment of a woman doctor to act as referee in a particular case where the circumstances were exceptional.

Soldiers and Civil Disorder.

MR. WARDLE (Stockport): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he can state when the Committee of Inquiry into the powers of magistrates to call out the military in cases of civil disorder will be appointed; what will be the composition of such Committee; and what the terms of reference will be.

MR. GLADSTONE: This Committee will be a Select Committee, appointed in the usual way by the House of Commons, and the names of the Members and the terms of reference will, I hope, appear on the Notice Paper in the course of a week.

Sunday Entertainments in London Liberal and Radical Clubs.

MR. SAMUEL ROBERTS (Sheffield, Ecclesall): I beg to ask the Prime Minister whether his attention has been called to the existence of three clubs, viz., the North Brixton Gladstone Club, the North Camberwell Radical Club and Institute, and the West Southwark Liberal and Radical Club, advertised as places of Sunday recreation and entertainment, and to the statement with reference to them that there are special reasons why too much publicity should not be given to casual visitors who have walked a long way, which will not prevent the club being communicated with; and what steps he proposes to take, in the Licensing Bill or otherwise, for the suppression of abuses of this character.

MR. GLADSTONE: I beg to answer this Question on behalf of my right hon. friend. I am aware that the three clubs named, in common with many others, arrange for entertainments on their premises on Sundays as well as on other days, and advertise accordingly. It seems to me that Sunday as well as weekday recreation is a proper object for a club, provided always that it is not carried to an extent or conducted under conditions amounting to an abuse. I have not been able to identify the particular statement referred to in the question, but if it indicates connivance at breaches of the law in regard to the admission and supply of intoxicating liquor to persons who are not members of the clubs, I may observe that the main object of the provisions as to clubs contained in the Licensing Bill is to provide better means than exist at present for detecting and punishing improper practices on club premises.

Spanish Law of Preference.

MR. MITCHELL-THOMSON: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he will procure and place in the Library a translated copy of the Spanish Law of 14th February, 1907, which enacts that in Spanish Government contracts a preference shall be given where possible to articles of Spanish production.

THE SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. KEARLEY, Devonport): A translation of the law was published on pages 31 und 32 of the Consular Report on the trade of Spain for 1906 (No. 3957 of the Annual Series), issued in February last.

Cost of Granite for British Dockyards.

MR. MITCHELL-THOMSON: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he is now in a position to give information with regard to the relative cost of British and foreign granite, delivered at Portsmouth, Haulbowline, and Rosyth, respectively.

MR. KEARLEY: The Board of Trade have no information available upon which they can state the relative cost of British and Foreign granite delivered at the places referred to.

Imports of Foreign Hops.

MR. COURTHOPE (Sussex, Rye): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether the s.s. "Adriatic" has arrived in a British port with a cargo of hops; and, if so, where such hops were produced, how many hundredweights of hops the vessel contained, what is their declared value, and at what price they have been advertised for sale on the British market.

MR. KEARLEY: The "Adriatic" arrived at Southampton on 2nd April. She had on board 10,570 bales of hops declared to be consigned from the United States of America, to weigh 18,500 cwts., and to be of the value of £41,625. I have no information as to the price at which this particular consignment was sold or advertised for sale on the British market.

Railway Superannuation Funds.

MR. HUDSON: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if he can now state the composition of the Committee which he has decided to appoint to inquire into railway superannuation funds.

MR. KEARLEY: The Committee will be composed as follows:—My right hon. friend the Member for Southwark (Chairman); my hon. friend the Member for Stockport; Mr. T. Hall Hall, Assistant-Registrar of Friendly Societies; Mr. Duncan C. Frazer, Actuary to the Royal Insurance Company; Mr. G. S. Fry, of the Finance Department of the Board of Trade; and a member (not yet selected) representing the interests of the railway companies.

Misleading Merchandise Marks.

MR. EVELYN CECIL (Aston Manor): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention has been called to an advertisement inserted by the British office of the Continental Tyre and Rubber Company of Germany in the *Motor Trader* of the 1st April last, depicting two large Union Jacks surrounding one of the company's tyres; and whether with a view to preventing this use of the national flag, the real object of which can only be to mislead customers into believing that these foreign-made goods are goods of British manufacture, thus withdrawing employment from British workmen, he can see his way to take any steps to prevent a reproduction of this advertisement, or else require that a design of German flags should be substituted for the British.

MR. KEARLEY: Yes, my attention has been called to this advertisement, and if the hon. Member will bring before me any further information in his possession relative to the matter in question, the Board of Trade will at once consider whether they are in a position to take any steps under the Merchandise Marks Act.

Scottish Railway Companies Agreement.

MR. ESSLEMONT (Aberdeen, S.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he is aware that the Caledonian and North British Railway Companies have completed an agreement with a view to obviate competition for traffic between Aberdeen and Glasgow and Edinburgh respectively, whether the companies referred to propose under the agreement to reduce the travelling facilities hitherto enjoyed by the public, and to pool the receipts for passenger and goods traffic on certain routes; and if he proposes to take any action in order to safeguard the interests of the public.

MR. KEARLEY: The Board of Trade have communicated with the railway companies on this subject and have received replies to the effect that a traffic agreement has been entered into, but that although the companies hope to reduce to some extent present competition in regard to train service, no reasonable facilities hitherto afforded to the public are intended to be withdrawn. The companies add as regards the pooling of receipts that the agreement only extends arrangements heretofore in operation. The Board of Trade will carefully consider any complaint which may be received of the withdrawal of reasonable facilities.

Consular Trade Reports.

MR. LYNCH: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether in view of the discrepancies both in form and in method which are at present to be found in the Trade Reports from foreign countries supplied by His Majesty's Consuls, he will, in conference with His Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, arrange that this question shall be referred to the Royal Commission recently appointed to examine into the trade accounts between the United Kingdom and foreign countries.

Mr. KEARLEY: The Departmental Committee which has recently been appointed is to consider a limited subject, viz., how far any change is desirable in the form in which the trade accounts of the United Kingdom are published as regards the countries from which imports are received and to which exports are sent. Instructions, however, have recently been sent to His Majesty's Consular Officers with regard to the form in which statistics should be given in their reports, which it is hoped will meet the object which the hon. Member has in view.

Postal Servants' Grievances.

Mr. WILES (Islington, S.): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he can state approximately the date on which the Departmental Inquiry appointed to report on the small classes of postal servants who were not heard before the Hobhouse Committee, will be made public.

The POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Mr. Sydney Buxton, Tower Hamlets, Poplar): I regret that it has not yet been possible to issue the result of the Departmental Inquiry into the smaller classes of postal servants who were not heard before the Parliamentary Committee. Their number is great—nearly 100—but the result will be published as soon as possible; and in any case any advantages which may accrue from the revision will date back to 1st January.

Postal Servants and the Territorial Force.

Mr. HAROLD COX (Preston): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General what additional expense will be involved by the regulations authorised by the Treasury providing for the grant of special leave for postal servants who are members of the Territorial Forces; and whether this additional expense will be charged to Post Office or to Army Votes.

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON: I am in communication with the Treasury on the subject of the Regulations they have laid down in regard to granting leave to civil servants who are members of the Territorial Army to enable them to attend training in camp. The matter is not settled yet.

Classification of Shrewsbury Post Office.

Mr. JOHN WARD: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he can state the basis upon which the units of work were formed in the case of the Shrewsbury postal district; and whether the work of the travelling sorting staff was included in the calculations of the Department.

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON: The units of work in the case of Shrewsbury were calculated in the same manner as in the case of all other offices, and the work performed by the Shrewsbury staff in the travelling post offices was taken into account. Fresh returns of work are being prepared.

Classification of Stoke-on-Trent Post Office.

Mr. JOHN WARD: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General if he can state the names and the number of the officers in the Stoke-on-Trent postal district which were excluded from the calculations of the department when deciding the units of work and classification of that district.

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON: The question is not understood. The units of work at Stoke-on-Trent have been calculated in the usual way and they give credit for all work done by the staff of the Stoke-on-Trent Office including those officers employed at the branch offices at Burslem, Hanley, and Longton. Fresh returns of work are now being taken.

Mr. JOHN WARD: Does the right hon. Gentleman take into account the whole of the work of the district when deciding on the *status* of the office; or are only a few selected offices taken?

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON: The whole of the work is taken into account.

Mr. JOHN WARD: Take the case of Stoke-on-Trent. Is the calculation confined to that office?

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON'S reply was inaudible.

Major ANSTRUTHER-GRAY (St. Andrew's Burghs): Does the new unit scale apply to the whole country?

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: Special returns have been taken out for Scotland.

Classification of Post Offices.

MR. JOHN WARD: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that the calculations of the Department as to cost of living in different towns have been made from a Report collected by the late Government in 1905; whether he is aware that such Report was laid before the Hobhouse Committee, and rejected by that Committee as unsatisfactory and unreliable in several important particulars, and that the Select Committee ordered a new and up-to-date investigation to be undertaken before the final classification of towns and districts was made; whether it is proposed to make such inquiry; and whether classification will be delayed pending the results of the investigation recommended by the Committee.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: The Select Committee recommended in Paragraph 260 of their Report that the inquiry into the cost of living which began in 1905 should be continued and completed as soon as possible. This recommendation is being acted upon and the classification of towns is being completed as rapidly as possible. The classification already announced, and the final classification when announced, will, as I have already stated, be always subject to revision, as local circumstances change, or as any fresh information in regard to the cost of living in any particular place may alter the conclusion come to by the Board of Trade.

MR. JOHN WARD: Am I to understand from that answer that a Report which was rejected by the Hobhouse Committee as inaccurate is the basis on which the right hon. Gentleman is fixing the *status* of offices?

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: That Report referred to only a few towns, a large number had been and are being examined, subject to correction by the Board of Trade.

Ecclesiastical Commissioners' Estates.

SIR RANDAL CREMER (Shoreditch, Haggerston): I wish to ask the hon. Member for the Crewe Division, as Ecclesiastical Commissioner, whether the Commissioners, when refusing to renew leases of their property, are under any statutory obligation to compensate publicans, shopkeepers, manufacturers, or any other persons, who may be doing a profitable business, at the expiration of their leases; and, if they are under no statutory obligation to do so, whether it is customary for the Commissioners voluntarily to compensate those whose business may suffer or be ruined by the non-renewal of their leases.

MR. TOMKINSON (Cheshire, Crewe): The Commissioners are not under any special obligation to pay compensation. They are in the same position as other owners of real property, and it is not their practice to give compensation for the non-renewal of leases.

Larceny Bill.

MR. COURTHOPE: I beg to ask the Patronage Secretary to the Treasury on what grounds he objects to the Second Reading of the Larceny Bill.

THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (MR. GEORGE WHITELEY, Yorkshire, W.R., Pudsey): In the opinion of the Government, it is not expedient that the Bill should proceed without discussion.

Morrogh Bernard Estate, Cahirciveen.

MR. BOLAND (Kerry, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that purchase agreements on the Morrogh Bernard estate, near Cahirciveen, were signed within the last few days; whether he is aware that John Golden, an evicted tenant on this estate, made application to the Estates Commissioners for reinstatement about four years ago; and can he say what steps have been or will now be taken to secure Golden's reinstatement.

THE VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE FOR IRELAND (MR. T. W. RUSSELL, Tyrone, S.): The purchase agreements referred to in the Question have not yet been lodged with the Estates Commissioners. The Commissioners have inquired into the case of John Golden and have decided that he is a suitable person to receive a holding if it should be found possible to provide him with one. The particular holding from which he was evicted is stated to be in the occupation of his niece.

Crosslee's Estate, Cookstown.

CAPTAIN CRAIG (Down, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can explain the cause of the delay on the part of the Estates Commissioners in the completion of the sale of Crosslee's estate, in the Cookstown Union, County Tyrone; and when is it expected that the matter will be wound up and the townlands of Tullydonnell and Tolvin vested in the tenants.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: The Estates Commissioners made an offer for the purchase of the estate of Porter and Crosslee which the Land Judge did not feel able to accept. The Commissioners have directed a further inspection of the estate with the view of reconsidering their offer, and it is anticipated that the matter will again come before the Land Judge during the coming sittings of the Court.

Lough Glynn House.

CAPTAIN CRAIG: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he is aware that Commissioner O'Brien, in 1900, prevented the sale of the sporting rights in connection with the sale of Lough Glynn House to a lay purchaser; whether, as a result of the Commissioner's action, an agitation against this purchase was commenced by the tenants, with the result that the sale of the house was abandoned and the premises were subsequently sold, at a much reduced price to a foreign religious community; and if it is proposed to make any compensation to the vendor for the loss directly entailed by the action of the Commissioner.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: In the year 1900, the Congested Districts Board proposed to sell the Dillon estate of about 92,000 acres, reserving the sporting rights. In consequence of this reservation, Mr. Commissioner O'Brien refused to sanction advances in certain cases in which the Board brought in agreements for sale, but this order was subsequently reversed on appeal. The Congested Districts Board, however, agreed in 1901 to sell the estate without any reservations. The Board originally proposed to sell Lough Glynn House and demesne in one lot, and they received an offer of £11,000 which they declined as being insufficient. Subsequently the Board sold for £2,100 the house and 220 acres (of which 120 acres consists of water) to the Roman Catholic Bishop of the Diocese for the purpose of establishing a technical school. A second portion, consisting of agricultural land and bogs which formed part of the demesne, was sold by the Board for £11,300, and they still retain a plantation of 200 acres which affords a revenue for the benefit of the estate generally. The fact, therefore, is that, by declining the original offer for the sale of the house and demesne as one lot, a considerable advantage has been derived, and it is not the case that there has been any loss to the vendor.

Sales of Government Licensed Property.

*CAPTAIN FABER: I beg to ask the Prime Minister whether he can state the total number of licensed houses under the direction of the various departments of the State that have been sold during the twelve months previous to 31st March of the current year, and their names and the prices given for them.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. ASQUITH, Fife, E.): I have no information on the subject. Returns could no doubt be obtained, if called for, from the various Government Departments which own real property, but I doubt whether the information when obtained would be of sufficient public interest to repay the labour involved in its preparation.

Coal Mines (Eight Hours) Bill.

LORD R. CECIL: I beg to ask the Prime Minister when it is proposed to take the Second Reading of the Coal Mines (Eight Hours) (No. 2) Bill.

MR. ASQUITH: I am not yet in a position to fix a date for the Second Reading.

Payments for New Licences.

MR. GIBB (Middlesex, Harrow): I beg to ask the Prime Minister if he will lay upon the Table particulars of the cases referred to by him on the introduction of the Licensing Bill, in which considerable lump sums have been paid down as a condition of the grant of new licences, with an estimate of the licence value for one year in each case.

MR. ASQUITH: All available particulars as to the payments imposed on the grant of new licences under the Act of 1904 are shown in Table IV. of the Annual Volumes of Licensing Statistics. I may mention that sums varying from £1,500 to £9,000 have been charged. I have no information on which to base an estimate of the licence value for one year in any of the cases shown in the Tables.

Monopoly Value of On-Licences.

MR. SAMUEL ROBERTS: I beg to ask the Prime Minister whether he is aware that there are in existence a number of on-licences, the full capital monopoly value of which has been paid by their owners in accordance with Section 4 of the Licensing Act, 1904; and whether it is intended, under the provisions of the Licensing Bill now before Parliament, that these licences shall, after fourteen years, be subject to renewal only on condition that a further monopoly value be paid for them.

MR. ASQUITH: I am aware that in a certain number of cases the monopoly value of a new house has been taken in the shape of a capital sum, and the question whether these cases require any peculiar treatment is under consideration.

MR. SAMUEL ROBERTS: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he is prepared to accept an Amendment to his Bill dealing with this matter?

MR. ASQUITH: I should like to see the Amendment first.

*MR. LEIF JONES (Westmoreland, Appleby) asked whether it was not the case that the longest period for which these licences could be granted was seven years, and that long before the fourteen years had expired they must come up for renewal.

MR. ASQUITH replied that seven years was the longest period for which such licences could be granted.

Lords and Commons.

EARL WINTERTON: I beg to ask the Prime Minister whether he is yet in a position to state if a Bill regulating the relations between this House and another place will be introduced this session.

MR. ASQUITH: So far as I can forecast at present there seems to be little probability of such a Bill being introduced this session.

Women and the Licensing Bill.

MR. ASHLEY: I beg to ask the Prime Minister whether, in view of the fact that Clause 20 of the Licensing Bill restricts the opportunities of employment open to women and that there is no constitutional means whereby they can express their opinion on this proposal, he will move, in the event of the Bill passing its Second Reading, that this clause shall be given the freest possible discussion and publicity by being committed to a Committe of the Whole House.

MR. ASQUITH: I do not think it would be convenient at the present stage to anticipate the proposals I shall have to make when the Bill goes into Committee, but I fully appreciate the importance of Clause 20, and I will not lose sight of it when these proposals are under consideration.

Licensing Compensation.

MR. J. HASLAM (Derbyshire, Chesterfield): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer how much money has been paid to tenants as compensation under the Licensing Act of 1904 during the time the Act has been in force up to 1st January, 1908, and how much money would have been paid to tenants during the same period if the Bill introduced by the present Government had been an Act; how many licences would be likely to lapse under the Act of 1904 during the next fourteen years, *i.e.*, from 1st January, 1909, and what would be the probable compensation to tenants during that period; and what would be the amount of compensation to tenants under the proposed Licensing Bill should it become an Act.

MR. ASQUITH: The only figures available are those of the compensation paid to licence-holders as a whole, who include many persons besides tenants, and even these are not available for any period before 1st January, 1906. It is from the nature of the case quite impossible to frame conjectural estimates of the kind contemplated by the latter part of the Question, and I can only repeat what I said in answer to the hon. Member for the Newbury Division on 28th March, viz., that the payments to be made to licence-holders under the Bill may be expected to be considerably larger than those made under the Act of 1904.

Revenue from Alcohol.

MR. PIKE PEASE (Darlington): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer what is the amount of revenue, including both Customs and Excise, derived from alcohol during the last twenty years.

MR. ASQUITH: I have had a statement prepared giving the information asked for in the Question in tabular form, which will be circulated with the Votes.

NEW MEMBERS SWORN.

Right hon. Walter Runciman, for Parliamentary Borough of Dewsbury.

James Fitzalan Hope, esquire, for Parliamentary Borough of Sheffield (Central Division).

Henry William Edmond Petty-Fitzmaurice, esquire, commonly called Earl of Kerry, for County of Derby (Western Division).

NEW BILLS.

PUBLIC HEALTH ACTS AMENDMENT (MARKETS) BILL.

"To enable rural district councils to provide Markets," presented by Mr. Rendall; supported by Mr. Hicks Beach, Mr. Howard, Mr. Abel Smith, and Mr. Rogers; to be read a second time upon Tuesday next, and to be printed. [Bill 196.]

ENGINES AND BOILERS (PERSONS IN CHARGE) (No. 2) BILL.

"To grant certificates to Persons in Charge of Steam and Motor Engines, Boilers, and steam and motor cranes," presented by Mr. Haslam; supported by Sir Thomas Roe, Mr. Bowerman, and Mr. William Edwin Harvey; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 198.]

NEW-BORN CHILDREN (PROTECTION) BILL.

"To provide for the better Protection of the Lives of New-born Children," presented by Lord Robert Cecil; supported by Mr. Shackleton, Mr. Simon, and Mr. Chiozza Money; to be read a second time upon Thursday, and to be printed. [Bill 199.]

HOME WORK BILL.

"To provide for the better regulation of Home industries," presented by Mr. Barnes; supported by Mr. Keir Hardie, Mr. Wilkie, Mr. Cameron Corbett, Mr. Cleland, Mr. Rainy, Mr. Charles Duncan, Mr. Summerbell, Mr. Parker, Mr. Jowett, Mr. Seddon, and Mr. Younger; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 200.]

ARMY COUNCIL BILL.

"To transfer to the Army Council certain statutory powers and duties of the Secretary of State and other officers; and for other purposes connected therewith," presented by Mr. Secretary Haldane; supported by Mr. Acland; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 197.]

DAYLIGHT SAVING BILL.

The Select Committee on the Daylight Saving Bill was nominated of: Mr.

Harrison-Broadley, Mr. Holt, Mr. Hutton, Sir Walter Nugent, Mr. Robert Pearce, Captain Pirie, Colonel Philipps, Mr. Thomas Frederick Richards, and Sir Edward Sassoon.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That Three be the quorum. —(*Mr. Whiteley.*)

LICENSING BILL.

Order for Second Reading read.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. ASQUITH, Fifeshire, E.): In moving the Second Reading of this Bill I shall not make any extended demand upon the time and patience of the House. In introducing the Bill two months ago I explained at great length and in much detail both its governing principles and its operative machinery, and it would be unpardonable in me now to cover the same ground a second time, particularly as I am still waiting for some reasoned answer to combat the two or three main propositions which I described as lying at the root of our proposal. In the debate which is now opening we shall no doubt hear everything that can be said in the way of criticism and of objection, and I shall hope before it comes to a close that with the added information which this discussion will supply I may be able, perhaps, once more to survey the field. But, as I observe that a hon. and learned Gentleman opposite, with, I understand, the authority and concurrence of the Front Opposition Bench, has given notice of an Amendment inviting the House to decline to proceed further with the Bill, I may fitly occupy a few moments at the outset of the discussion by re-stating that which is fundamental, and only that which is fundamental, in our case. When I introduced the Bill I said the Government had two objects in view. The first was to improve—primarily by reduction of the number of licences, but also by a number of other salutary changes in the law—the conditions under which the liquor traffic is carried on. The second object was not less important than the first—to recover for the State, with due regard to existing interests—with due but not undue regard to existing interests—its dominion and control over this monopoly. Dealing for a minute or two with the former of these two points, our proposals proceed upon the assumption that intemperance and its attendant abuses are encouraged and increased by the excessive multiplication of facilities for the sale and consumption of drink. I want to know in the first place whether that proposition is disputed. [OPPOSITION cries of "Yes."] It is. That clears the ground to some extent. No one, I think, denies that the evils to which I have referred in a large measure arise from and are fostered by moral and social conditions with which it is difficult, if not impossible, for any legislation directly to deal. That, at any rate, is common ground among us. Nor does any one assert—I, at least, have never asserted—that there is anything in the nature of a mathematical correspondence in any given area between the amount of drunkenness per head of the population and the number of licences per 1,000 or per 10,000. But he must be blind to the facts of life and to the teachings of experience who does not recognise that there is a relation, and a very direct relation, between temptation and excess, between the growth and exercise of a pernicious habit and the invitations and opportunities which are held out for its indulgence. I was rather surprised a moment ago to hear two or three hon. Gentlemen opposite, rather faintly, it is true, deny my statement that, at any rate, there is some connection between the number of licences and the amount of intemperance. I thought in this House, at any rate, that was one proposition that was accepted among all parties and on both sides. If it is not so, what becomes of the temperance side of that great measure of reform—the Act of 1904? On what pretext, and by what argument from the temperance point of view, was the Bill of 1904 presented to this House? It was that unless you gave compensation, unless you facilitated the task of the licensing justices by giving compensation, you could not bring about that reduction of licences which the authors of that Bill, at any rate at that time, contended was a necessary condition of reform. As I said when I was speaking two months ago on the First Reading, I agree there has been under the operation of the Act of 1904 a considerable and, indeed, a substantial diminution in the number of licences. How do hon. Members opposite justify the expenditure to which the publicans have been put during the past four years to compensate the persons whose licences have been suppressed unless they think that that measure was a substantial step in the direction of temperance reform ? I agree that under the Act of 1904 there has been a considerable, and in some parts of the country a substantial, diminution in the number of licences. But that diminution has taken place, for reasons which I pointed out at length on the First Reading, at a rate which you cannot anticipate as likely to be sustained. Moreover, it has been sporadic, uneven, and very costly. What is the change in that respect which we propose to introduce by this Bill ? We make the operation of the process of reduction compulsory and uniform throughout the whole length and breadth of the country, having due regard to special local conditions and circumstances. In other words, we make it in such a form as to bring about a really effective reduction in the total number of licences within a specified and prescribed time.

MR. YOUNGER (Ayr Burghs): And cheaper.

MR. ASQUITH: We do, I agree, make it cheaper—to the trade. We make it cheaper to the trade, and we make it more effective and more satisfactory from the point of view of the public by bringing back the basis of compensation to what I have always believed was intended by the Act of 1904—and I have not heard from any hon. Gentleman sitting on the bench opposite who was responsible for the authorship of that Act that I am wrong —and incidentally by recognising the equitable claim of the licence-holder to a larger share in the compensation fund than he has had hitherto. It is in that way that we propose to bring about what we conceive to be the first step in the direction of really effective temperance reform—namely, a reduction in the number of licences and of the facilities for the sale of drink. If you accept the assumption, which I confess I thought was with general assent taken for granted, that such a reduction is desirable, the only serious criticism which I have come across upon this part of the proposals of the Government is this. It is said, and I think it is said with truth, that it is no use suppressing public-houses if you do not at the same time provide against the revival of the evil by preventing the springing up in their places of bogus clubs. My colleagues and myself are keenly alive to that danger ; and while, as was said by my right hon. friend the Secretary of State in answer to a deputation and other representations on behalf of existing clubs, we are quite prepared to listen to suggestions for removing or mitigating anything in the Bill as it stands which can cause reasonable offence or inconvenience to respectable clubs, I add, with the utmost emphasis and the most complete sincerity, that we shall welcome with interest and sympathy any really practical proposal to do more than the Bill at present does to prevent the up-growing in the future of parasitic drinking shops masquerading in the guise of clubs.

Now, Sir, I come to the second great and governing purpose of this Bill —namely, the recovery for the State of complete and unfettered control over this monopoly. Here, again, we proceed upon certain assumptions, which I will restate in order that this debate may clearly show whether and how far they are desired. What are they ? In the first place, What is the real nature of the property in licences ? I endeavoured to point out, in introducing the Bill, and I am not going over the steps of the argument again, that it is a clear, undisputed proposition of law in this country that a licence for the sale of intoxicating liquors in public houses is a licence granted for a year and for a year only. No lawyer, certainly not since the decision in "Sharp v. Wakefield," nearly twenty years ago, will dispute that it is and always has been in the absolute discretion of the licensing authority to refuse the renewal of a licence, just as much as to refuse to grant a new one. That is the legal position, which nobody who knows the law upon the subject can contradict. But I quite agree, as I pointed out when I introduced the Bill, that annual licence has had coupled with it the practice of what I may call two defeasible expectations—the expectation, first, which was never anything more than an expectation which any body of licensing justices could at any time defeat, that the licence would be renewed in the absence of misconduct, and the expectation, the realisation of which, again, was entirely in the discretion of the licensing authority, that the holder of the licence would be protected by them against free competition by the granting of similar licences to his neighbours. Certainly expectations of that peculiarly fragile kind are not a form of property.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS (Birmingham, Bordesley): Then why give fourteen years?

MR. ASQUITH: I am going to tell the right hon. Gentleman that. They are not a form of property. But although they are not a form of property—and although I think those who are interested in the maintenance of what are called the rights of property in this country are most ill-advised in associating their cause with this particular case—they do deserve consideration. The legislation proposed by the Government proves that we think they deserve consideration, and they are receiving it, as we believe, in a most equitable form. I would like hon. Gentlemen opposite seriously to consider whether I am not saying something which ought to command their assent when I say that nothing can be more absurd, nor in the long run more injurious to the interests of property, than likening the gigantic transactions which during the last twenty years have taken place in this most speculative business to the sale of other classes of commodities like land and goods, where the vendor can give and the purchaser can acquire a permanent and indefeasible title. If, as I believe, and as I do not think anybody who is acquainted with the law and the practice in this matter can deny, that is an accurate and adequate account of the nature of the interest which a licence confers, I am brought to the question—What in its real nature and essence is that which passes by the name of monopoly value? That is a subject upon which, I am sorry to say, there is a melancholy abundance of confused thinking. I am going to try to the best of my ability to make it clear. Is there such a thing as monopoly value? Some people say there is not. It certainly does not lie in the mouths of the authors of the Act of 1904 to say there is not. The phrase is taken from that very Act. It is a phrase to which, I presume, they attach some intelligible meaning. It appears, at any rate, upon the Statute-book, and it is a thing which is predicated in that Act, and provided for in the case of every new licence which is now granted in this country. I think a good deal of the confusion which prevails on this subject would be cleared away if we could take the simplest of all possible cases—the case, that is to say, of what is called a free public-house. A free public-house is a house which is let to a publican who can buy his beer and his other liquors where he pleases, and who can sell his beer and other liquors at what prices he pleases. In the case of such a person what is the monopoly value, or, to put the same thing in a different form, what is the added value which the possession of a licence gives to the premises? Measured in terms of rent it means, of course, what this publican tenant, in virtue of his receiving from the State a special privilege which other classes of traders do not enjoy, would pay, as compared with that which would be given or offered by another tenant engaged in a business in which he was not similarly privileged. And, again, if you consider how that additional rent would be arrived at, it is pretty clear, I think, that it represents, roughly at any rate, the comparative extra profit which the publican can make in virtue of his monopoly, as compared with the other tradesman, each being assumed to bring in, approximately at any rate, the same amount of capital, and to apply to his business the same skill and the same energy and the same enterprise. If that is true—and I think it is; I do not think anybody will dispute it—the monopoly value, measured not as rent but as a lump sum, means the capitalised value of the difference between the licensed and the unlicensed rental of the premises. That is what is meant by monopoly value, I believe, in the Act of 1904—it is certainly what is meant by the Government in this Bill, and in connection with this Bill—neither more nor less. The House will see, the moment they have realised that, that it is a much smaller and a much more manageable thing than that which is often loosely described by the same term. For "monopoly value" is used—and not unnaturally used—very often in a totally different sense. When you come to a tied house you have got a new and quite a different class of monopoly from anything that the State has ever created, or has ever recognised. You have got the monopoly which the brewer has created for himself by judicious arrangements and bargainings—a monopoly for the sale in those premises of his own liquor and his own commodities free from the competition of his rivals in trade. I am certain that everyone who is conversant with the course of business in this industry during the last twenty years will agree with me when I say that a very large proportion of what—admittedly now—were inflated prices paid in the '90's and in the early part of the present century, for licensed premises, which now have to be written off, were paid not for the State monopoly, which I defined a few minutes ago, but for this special privilege, which the brewers alone were responsible for bringing into existence. Now the State has nothing to do with that. Not only are we not going to pay for it, but we are not going to take it into account, and the Bill does not touch it at all. There is no reason why it should, because it has been dwindling and dwindling, and is gradually disappearing of itself. The fact that this competition—a reckless competition it was often, between companies with watered capital and with ambitions far in excess of any legitimate openings for their trade—this reckless competition, fratricidal in intention, turned out to be suicidal in effect. Trying to cut their rivals' throats, they in too many cases succeeded in cutting only their own. There has been—of course everybody knows it; it has nothing to do with the introduction of this Bill, or the fear of the introduction of this Bill—there has been an enormous depreciation in this class of property in the course of the last five or six years—probably greater than in any other branch of investment on the Stock Exchange. To what is that depreciation due? Is it due to the fear of temperance legislation? Not a bit. It is due in part—I will gladly recognise that—to the diminished consumption of intoxicants in the country generally, which is one of the most remarkable economic and social phenomena of the last few years. It is due in part also—so I am told, and I think there is very good evidence for the proposition—to the inferior quality and composition of much of the liquor which is sold. But, after full allowance has been made for both those facts, I am sure I am well within the mark when I say that this depreciation—great, unexampled, bringing disaster to hundreds and thousands of innocent or credulous investors—was mainly owing to the money which was lost in the gamble for restricted premises in the attempt of rival brewers to secure in any particular locality a special or an exclusive market for their own wares. Well, I say we have got nothing whatever to do with that. It is a circumstance peculiar to the conduct of this trade for which Parliament is in no sense responsible, and which this Bill will render neither more nor less severe. It may be well—I am not expressing any definite opinion; I am certainly not giving any precise pledge—but it may be well, in view of what I have said, before this Bill emerges from the Committee stage—and I am saying this almost without consultation with my colleagues, and only throwing it out on my own suggestion—to define in terms in the Bill what monopoly value really means. I am not sure whether it may not also be well, in order to prevent the growth of undesirable expectations, to secure in the Bill that monopoly value, however it is defined, shall, when it comes into possession, go not to the locality, but to the State. However, I only throw that out incidentally. But going back to my argument and trying to restate as clearly and as shortly as I can the fundamental positions on which this legislation rests, I say that, holding as we do the view that I have expressed, first as to the nature of a licence and the interest created by it, and next as to the origin and as to the measure of the monopoly value, it is perfectly clear to us that the logic and the equity of the case are adequately met by a time-limit. There would be no legal wrong, as I have pointed out, in respect of which any person could complain in any Court of law for redress, if we had proposed to enact that every existing licence should come to an end at the end of the current year.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS: Hear, hear; robbery.

MR. ASQUITH: I am not sure that the right hon. Gentleman quite follows my argument. I am not talking about policy; I am talking about law. I say there would be no legal wrong by an enactment to that effect, and that is what they do in the United States of America and in our own Colonies—they have done it over and over again. But we think, and rightly, in my opinion, that not only policy but equity demand the fair recognition of the expectations upon which this industry has so long been conducted. They ought to have—it is only fair that they should have, although many of them have not conducted their affairs with much circumspection or foresight—[OPPOSITION cries of "Oh!"]—they ought to have time to turn round and to provide for the future. I will quote a passage from a speech of mine on the First Reading of this Bill, because it represents the principle upon which the Government proceeded in this matter. I asked the question, "What is the principle we ought to adopt?" and I said, "It is this—that your time-limit, assuming there is to be a time-limit, should be as long as, and not longer than, the time which will suffice for a prudent trader"—I ask the House to observe these words, they were carefully chosen—"for a prudent trader, who has carried and is carrying on his business with due regard"—this is not a bolt from the blue—"to its special character and its peculiar risks, to make adequate provision against the disappearance at the close of the time-limit of that part"—only that part—"of his profits which is to be attributed to the monopoly value of his licence." That is the principle upon which this Bill is framed, and, if "monopoly value" bears the meaning which I have attempted to affix to it and to justify, it is a principle which, it seems to me, is in strict accordance with even an indulgent view of the equities of the case. I have dealt with this point as clearly as I could, because now I am going to ask the hon. and learned Gentleman who has given notice of a Motion for the rejection of this Bill a definite question. Here we come to an issue of principle. Do you accept the principle of the time-limit? It is a question which I meant the hon. Gentleman to answer. Will the right hon. Gentlemen on that bench accept that principle? Do you agree, in other words—I am not speaking of the particulars, I am speaking of the principle of the time-limit—that the property created by a licence is of such a nature and only such a nature as I have described? Do you agree, or do you not agree? [An Hon. Member on the OPPOSITION benches: No.] We shall see in time. We are only at the opening of the discussion now, and I am entitled to put these questions, and to expect an answer before the debate comes to an end. Do you agree, or do you not agree, that the State is entitled to resume, after fair notice, the monopoly which it has itself created? Now, if those questions are once answered in the affirmative, we will listen—I certainly should listen—with attention to anything which can fairly be said, either one way or the other, as to the precise length of the time-limit. But are you going to say, as the organs of the trade say—as the financial magnates of the City of London assembled in solemn conclave say—that law and custom together, coupled with the provisions of your beneficent Act of 1904, have given the publican—no, not the publican—given the brewer, the speculator in tied houses, a permanent and perpetual interest, subject only to being defeated by proof of misconduct or upon payment of compensation?

There is the clear issue of principle between us which the trade has raised. That is the issue which this House, upon the Second Reading of this Bill, has now to decide. Are we going to transform or to assent to the transformation of a speculative counter into a coin of the realm bearing the image and superscription of the King? I do not think we are. Speaking for the Government and my colleagues on this bench, I may say that we were neither surprised nor intimidated by the outcry which our proposals have raised. We have long since been warned of the disaster and the ruin that was in store for any Government or for any party which dared to lay sacrilegious hands upon the monopoly of one of the wealthiest, one of the most widely-diffused, and one of the most electorally influential interests in this country. I say, with all respect to them, that I believe they are living in this matter in a fool's paradise, and have miscalculated the character and potency of the forces which are arrayed behind this measure. However that may be, we shall persevere with our task, and I appeal to the House of Commons with confidence for their support. I beg to move.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

* MR. CAVE (Surrey, Kingston), in moving, "That this House declines to proceed further with a measure which, while failing to promote the cause of temperance, violates the principles of equity," said: I rise to move the Amendment which stands in my name, and if I occupy a substantial part of the time of the House it will only be because I shall try to give what may be only a part of the reasoned answer which the right hon. Gentleman has asked for, an answer not to the wild and whirling words with which he concluded his speech, but to the arguments that he addressed to the House and the questions which he has been good enough to put to us. May I begin by saying quite shortly what is the point of view from which I approach this question? We have heard the arguments of the total abstainers; we have heard the arguments of those who belong to what is called "the trade." Both classes have a right to be heard, but neither of them will decide the question now before this House. It will be decided entirely or mainly by men who, having no kind of interest in the liquor trade, yet know that as things are, the sale of liquor must go on for many years to come—by men who, while knowing and acknowledging, as I do, the evils caused in this country by intemperance, and being willing to take any reasonable course to diminish or put an end to those evils, yet know that in the end no proposals can succeed —whether they become law or not—in putting an end to those evils, unless they are just and fair to all. It is as one of that class that I approach this question, and I may say also as one whose public duty has brought him into constant and close connection with intemperance and the crimes brought about by intemperance, and who is therefore specially interested in any proposals for dealing with the questions raised in the Bill. Having said so much, I come at once to the fundamental principles of the Bill, and I promise the Prime Minister that I am not going to shirk any of the questions which he has put. The two fundamental principles, as I understand, are these: the statutory reduction of licences and the time-limit. Those are the two pillars of the Bill, and I want the House to examine with me on what sort of foundation these two pillars stand. Take, first, the reduction of licences. It is strange there should be still a controversy as to whether the reduction of licences has any effect on intemperance in this country. I believe the controversy is due to this, that when people talk of reducing licences, they are not all speaking of the same thing. Some men, when speaking of reduction, mean cutting off undesirable licences—licences which, owing to the position, neighbourhood or character of the houses, or owing to the fact that they are in a nest or group of houses which compete with one another, and so lead to excessive drinking, or on some similar ground, ought to be suppressed. Other people mean by the reduction of licences cutting down the licences, quite apart from any question of local

needs, to a fixed proportion to the population. If you use the word reduction in the former sense, I am in favour of reduction. I believe that it is a useful thing that licensing authorities should be absolutely free to refuse a licence to an undesirable house; but that power the authorities already have under the Act of 1904. I shall not have any contest as to the law with the Prime Minister on the point that that power of refusal existed before 1904, except in the case of one class of house which the right hon. Gentleman forgot, namely, the ante-1869 beer-house. But although the discretion in form was absolute, in effect it was exceedingly difficult to exercise, and no one who has not sat as I have, hour after hour and day after day, listening to these cases' hearing the petty details of these small businesses, and listening to the appeals that those who are engaged in them should be allowed to carry on what admittedly is a lawful trade—no one who has not gone through that experience can imagine how great was the difficulty, if not the impossibility, before the Act of 1904, of making any large reduction in the number of licences. The Act came as a great relief to magistrates throughout the country, and after three years experience I say without fear of contradiction by anybody who knows the facts that it is a very valuable instrument for the purpose for which it was framed, and it has been very freely used. The figures are not in dispute. For ten years before the Act the reduction was at the rate of nearly 400 houses a year, and during the three years since the Act the average ready reduction has been about 1,500. If you take the figures for 1907 which were recently given by the Home Office, the amount of levy throughout the country was 95 per cent. of the maximum sum allowed, and the amount expended in 1907 was greater than that expended in any previous year. It is quite true that as you come to the more valuable houses the price per house increases, and therefore the number of licences refused under the Act must to some extent diminish. But although the number of houses refused is lower, they will be doing a greater trade and therefore there is the same reduction in the consumption of liquor as if a larger number of houses were done away with. What I wish to impress upon the House is that, in view of the good work that has been done, the Government might well have had the patience to give the 1904 Act a somewhat longer trial, and in that case they would have found that within a very moderate period of time notable progress would have been made in the cutting off of undesirable houses, and that before very many years had passed all houses which ought not to exist would have been refused, and the Act would have remained as a valuable instrument to be used from time to time as the habits of the country changed, and the demand for intoxicating liquor diminished. Therefore reduction in that sense is, I believe, already provided for; but if reduction means the reduction of licences according to a fixed ratio to population, then I am bound to say that I have seen no kind of evidence to show that there is any substantial benefit to be expected from such a decrease. I have heard it asserted that such a benefit would accrue, but I have heard no one attempt to prove it. The matter was considered by the last Royal Commission, which reported in 1899 in these terms—

> "There is apparently no relation between the number of licences and the amount of drunkenness."

That was the opinion of a majority of the Commission, composed of men of great authority and not belonging to one party, who gave to the matter a great amount of careful and thoughtful consideration. But it does not rest there. The Commission did not confine themselves to that conclusion, but gave in support of it some very striking figures, into which I will not go to-day, but which are well worth studying. These figures and that conclusion have been supported year after year by the statistics in regard to public-houses. I will only trouble the House with one reference. Take the Licensing Statistics of last year. I am quoting from page 13 of the book, where you have two columns. In one column the licensing authorities—counties—are arranged in order of the proportion of licences per 10,000 of the population. Those which have the least licences in proportion to population are at the top, and those with the most are at the bottom. In the other column you have the convictions for drunkenness. Those having the lowest number of convictions per 10,000 of population are at the head of the list, and those with the most are at the end. The extraordinary result is seen that the four worst counties in the matter of convictions for drunkenness, are the West Riding of Yorkshire, Glamorganshire, Durham, and Northumberland. But in the list showing the number of licences per 10,000 of population, those four counties, all of them, stand extremely high. Northumberland is second, Durham fifth, Glamorganshire ninth, and Yorkshire, tenth. On the other hand, take the best counties in point of convictions, Oxfordshire and Cambridgeshire. They are at the top of the list in the matter of convictions, but in the list of licences, Oxfordshire stands lowest but three, and Cambridgeshire lowest but one. But the matter does not end there; there was an article published the other day by the hon. Member for Blackburn in one of the reviews, and he gave in that review the corresponding figures for two boroughs, viz., Accrington and Nelson, which he stated to be only twelve miles apart, fairly equal as to population, both cotton-weaving centres, both strongly Nonconformist, and their housing conditions very similar. What did he find? He found in Accrington, with three times the number of licences in proportion to population, only half the proportionate number of convictions for drunkenness as compared with Nelson. He says—

> "It is no part of my business to assign reasons for this paradox. Many reasons might be suggested; the degree of police supervision is one explanation,"

[MINISTERIAL cheers]—I am still reading the quotation—

> "although it can scarcely apply to this particular case where the towns are so close together and the whole character of the people so similar. It will be noticed that Nelson has more clubs than licensed houses."

The hon. Member might have added and more off-licensed houses than either—

> "And this may have a bearing on the fact that there is more drunkenness at Nelson than Accrington."

That comparison is based upon the number of convictions for drunkenness. The hon. Member went on to give some striking figures showing the increase in the consumption of drink in some of our Colonies and in the United States, as compared with this country. This strange result is found there, that whereas in the United States, Canada, and New Zealand the practice of local prohibition of the sale of drink is constantly growing, the consumption of drink per head of population is steadily increasing; while in this country, where nothing of the kind takes place, the consumption of drink per head is, I am glad to say, decreasing. I must make one more quotation, because it leads up to an explanation I wish to give. The hon. Member says in this article—

> "I am not arguing from all these figures that the suppression of licences increases the consumption of liquor and that increased facilities tend to greater sobriety, but the figures do prove conclusively that there are factors in the drink question which the reduction of licences does not touch, and those other influences seem to operate in defiance of the law of supply."

What is the reason for this, which appears to some people a paradox, but which is not a paradox at all? The fact is that the consumption of drink does not depend, as the writer of the article seems to suggest, upon the law of supply, but upon the law of demand; and no amount of tampering with the sources of supply, so long as they are legitimate, affects the consumption of drink. The hon. Member for Spen Valley in 1904, when he was seeking to throw the compensation upon publicans said that if you refuse a licence two-thirds of the custom goes to the other houses; and he might have added that the other one-third, if it represents a legitimate demand, goes to the off-licensed holders or the clubs. If you suppress these, people who want to drink will drink at home, and if you forbid that you will only drive the demand "under." If the demand exists, sources of supply will be found, and you will come, in the end, to the condition of some of the cities of the United States, where not only the sale, but the importation of drink is wholly prohibited, and yet you find the amount of drunkenness far exceeding per head of population anything found in the city and county in London. I do think that the last word about the mechanical reduction of licences was said by Mr. Gladstone when he made the often-quoted statement that—

> "The mere limitation of numbers, the idol of Parliament for the last twenty years, is, if pretending to the honour of a remedy, little better than an imposture."

But His Majesty's Government are still worshipping at the shrine of this idol, and they propose a mechanical reduction based upon the scale of population. The estimate the right hon. Gentleman gave was a reduction by 30,000 to 32,000 houses in the next fourteen years. I will assume that to be correct, but I do not accept it as correct, because I have tested it as regards several counties and have found it considerably below the mark. I think you will find when the figure comes to be worked out it will be found nearer 40,000 than 30,000. But taking it as correct, the question, of course, arises, if you increase the number of refusals how are you to compensate the houses refused? If the Prime Minister had said: "I am going to bring about a great public improvement in relation of the sale of drink; I draw from the sale of drink in this country a direct profit to the State of something like 38½ millions sterling a year; I will ask the House to give up the half-million to a public purpose, and so increase the compensation fund and in that manner facilitate the reduction of licences,"—if he had said that, I do not think that many people on either side of the House would have very greatly objected. That would have been one way of dealing with the matter, but the Government prefer what I venture to think is a less generous course: instead of increasing the compensation fund they propose to tamper with the scale of compensation. The right hon. Gentleman defended his proposals by an attack upon what is well-known as the Kennedy judgment. I listened with great attention to what he said, and although I say it with great hesitation, I think that he misunderstood that judgment. The effect of the judgment is shortly this. Under the present Act if a licence is refused the owner is entitled to get, by way of compensation, the market value of the licence. What the learned Judge said was that to get the market-value you must consider what the license would fetch by public auction. Among the possible buyers would be the brewer, who might want to buy the house as an outlet for his commodity but who before bidding would want to know the amount and quality of the beer supplied to and sold in the house. Therefore for the purpose of ascertaining the market-value the Court might have evidence of the supply and the consumption of liquor. I venture to think that the decision is good sense, and in fact a very distinguished Judge has since referred to it as a decision which cannot be attacked. But what the Prime Minister said was this—

> "The fundamental vice—if I may use such an expression in speaking of the judgment of a learned Judge—what seems to us to be the fallacy of the Kennedy judgment consisted in taking into account, not the profit made by the trade retailer but the profit made by the manufacturer in regard to the drink which he supplied to the house."

Therefore, the right hon. Gentleman understands the judgment to be this—you may take into account the profit made by the manufacturer, that is the brewer, in regard to a licensed house. But that is exactly what the learned Judge said you must not do. Mr. Justice Kennedy, as he then was, said this—

> "In my opinion the Attorney-General was quite justified in arguing that any evidence as to the profit which may be made by the selling company upon this trade cannot be material."

That clearly negatives the very point the right hon. Gentleman made, and I hope that he will reconsider the argument which he addressed to the House on this point; for, if I am right, the whole of his criticisms on that judgment were based on a misunderstanding. On the other hand, there are obvious objections to the method of fixing compensation proposed in the Bill. The Royal Commission said that they regarded rateable value as altogether beside the mark as a basis of compensation, and they gave their reason for that conclusion. They reported that—

> "While the fact that the house is licensed may be considered to some extent in the assessment it is tolerably certain that the goodwill cannot be considered at all. But the licence and the goodwill are the things for which

compensation would be given, not the building, which the owner would retain. We, therefore, regard rateable value as altogether beside the mark as a basis for compensation."

And now let us test the fairness of this method by some figures. A most rev. Prelate has said that he approves the Bill, but awaits with expectant interest the discussion by experts and business men of the financial details. I venture to suggest that when you are considering whether justice is done to the owners of these houses financial details are of the essence of the Bill. And if I show that the compensation given under this Bill is but a fraction of that which ought to be given, then I think that he and others will reconsider the provisional approval they have given to this proposal. Let me give the figures in a few concrete cases. Take the houses which were the subject of the Kennedy judgment, and take first the "Hand and Spear" at Woking. In that case £1,123 was given to the owners and persons interested. Of that amount £150 went to the tenant, and the remaining £973, subject to costs, to the owners of the house. Under this Bill the compensation would only be £136, or 14 per cent. of the market value. The other house was the "Crown" at Cobham. Mr. Justice Kennedy, in that case, gave £1,497, of which £250 went to the tenant, and the remaining £1,247, less costs, to the owners. The right hon. Gentleman under this Bill gives £52, which is on the basis of 4 per cent. of the market value.

THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. HERBERT SAMUEL, Yorkshire, Cleveland): Will the hon. and learned Member say how he arrives at the £52 ?

*MR. CAVE: Yes, Sir; it is arrived at by treating the assessment as the basis. I will give the hon. Gentleman particulars afterwards if he desires it. The figures were worked out for me by some very well-known experts. These figures are for the first year of the statutory reduction, and if the licences were refused in a later year, the amounts would be less. Some other valuers, who, I think, have perhaps had the largest experience of any valuers in these matters, took for me forty-three London houses, not selected houses, but all the houses dealt with by them last year, for the purposes of compensation. They give, as the actual compensation for those houses, £104,578. The owners of those houses, under the Bill, would get in the first year £18,000; and, if you take the mean year, that is the seventh year, which, I think is fair, they would get £10,930, or about 11 per cent. of the market value. Again, they have taken twenty-one London houses not the property of brewers, but the property of the licensees themselves. The capital invested in those twenty-one houses is £550,000; of course, houses are very valuable in London. On these houses the sum of £317,000 was borrowed, not from brewers, but from private lenders. Under this Bill for these houses, which cost £550,000, the total compensation in the first year would be £116,000. In other words the owners would lose the whole of their investment, and the mortgagees would lose nearly two-thirds of their money. I have here case after case of this kind, but I will not weary the House with them, though I think they are important. There will be a chance of giving them later on. Let me deal with one or two points which may be put against me. It may be said that the houses are under-assessed. I know that is said. I doubt whether that is the case in London, or in any well-known centres. Valuers have become more and more expert; they do not accept the rent or the figures given to them by the owner or occupier of the house; they look into the trade, and they are not slow to put up the assessment. But apart from that, I do not believe that, put up the assessment as you will, you can fairly put it up to any figure which would produce, when worked out on the basis of this Bill, any large proportion of the market value of the house. Then it is said: "Oh, whatever may happen to the owner—and we care very little about him—the publican is better off under this Bill." The Prime Minister said so the other day, and it has been said more than once. The hon. Member for Barnard Castle went down to a country place and is reported to have told the people there that the publicans would get twenty or thirty times as much as they did under the present system—[AN HON. MEMBER: Ten times]. I think he said twenty or thirty, but in fact it makes very little difference whether it is ten, twenty, or thirty times, because, in any case, the compensation fund, if that were true, would be bankrupt in a year. But what is the justification for the statement that the publican would get anything more under this Bill than he gets under the existing system? Under the Act of 1904 there is a provision for dividing the compensation money; and in attributing a share to the publican, you are to have regard to his conduct of the business and the length of time during which he has been the holder of the licence. Under that provision, in my experience, the publican has had compensation for loss of business, and generally speaking, I believe, a sum equivalent to a year's profit. That is based, no doubt, on the provision of the Act, that he "shall, in no case, receive a less amount than he would be entitled to as tenant from year to year." Therefore the publican has had something. Further, he has the right to appear before the justices for the purpose of putting forward his claim; and if he is dissatisfied he has an appeal. This Bill deals with the matter in very much the same way. The Bill does say in terms that he shall receive compensation for "loss of business," and then uses similar words to those which I have quoted from the Act of 1904, but it omits (rather oddly) the provision in the Act of 1904, that in no case shall he receive a less amount than he would have been entitled to as a tenant from year to year. Under this Bill he is simply to have such amount, if any, as the Inland Revenue Commissioners choose to give him for loss of business. He has, it would seem, no right to be heard before them, and if they give him too little, he has no appeal. The Commissioners are not bound by the provision of the Act of 1904 that he shall be at least treated as a tenant from year to year. They may give him as much, or just as little as they choose, and he must take it. How, therefore, can you say that the Bill will give the tenant more than he would have got under the Act of 1904? I do not believe it. I have here a Memorandum of the Commissioners published some years ago, in which they say, dealing with the publican's lease or agreement for the purpose of death duties, that he is only a tenant from year to year, and this is sometimes determinable by a three months' notice so that obviously the publican's goodwill is very trifling.

MR. ASQUITH: What is the date of that?

*MR. CAVE: It is a Memorandum dated the 14th May, 1890. If the Commissioners act, as they may act, on the same principle now, the publican would be rather worse off. At all events, I see no grounds for saying that he will get more than under the Act of 1904. And look for a moment at the other side, because when hon. Members go about saying that they are the publican's friends, I think they ought to tell him the disadvantages as well as the advantages of the Bill. On the other side there is this, that during the fourteen years the publican has a greater chance of having his licence refused, and that at the end of fourteen years, he will lose his licence altogether, or pay full value for it. And during that time the compensation levy will be made not over his county or district, but over the whole of England, so that he has no longer any chance whatever of profiting by the reduction of licences. The levy under the Act of 1904 was often called a premium of insurance; and it was said that the publican might fairly be asked to pay this because he would get it back if his licence were refused. But under this Bill it could not be called that, because the policy of insurance never matures. The licensee has to pay his life premium for fourteen years, and to be slaughtered at the end of that period without receiving the policy moneys. It is no longer in any sense a premium, but a heavy and oppressive tax, levied on a part of the population, for the alleged benefit of the whole. I hope it will not be said again, without some reason shown, that the licence-holder would be in a better position under this Bill. Before leaving this particular part of the subject, I want to mention one other argument used in favour of this Bill. It is said that it will restore the freedom of the local justices. Nothing was ever less true than that. Under the present Act no licence can be refused except on the initiative of the local justices. They make their recommendations to the county committee, representing the quarter sessions, which are composed of justices of the whole county, and the local benches are represented on the county committee. They have a right, under the rules, to confer with the county committee, and they do confer; and their recommendations, in my experience, are always accepted, unless there is some financial reason against them, or unless, after hearing evidence which is solemnly given in Court, the committee come to the decision that the licences ought to be renewed. Therefore, there is a good deal of freedom under the present conditions, but under this Bill there will be little or none. The justices will be bound, under the statute, to present a scheme for reduction according to a fixed scale. The scheme may be altered by three gentlemen sitting in London, and as so altered it must be carried out by the justices, whether they think it right or wrong, and the only freedom in this respect left to the local bench is this, that they are free to select the victims who are to be sacrificed to the Licensing Commission and to act as executioners for that body. The duty so thrown upon them is an odious duty, for they will know that no proper compensation will be paid. To conclude this part of the subject, I will make one quotation from a speech made by the Prime Minister last year. He said to a deputation of debenture-holders—

> "I can assure you that, in any legislation which the Government proposes, they will keep in view the legitimate interests of all persons who have invested their money in this trade. It is a lawful trade, not prohibited by law, and a trade, therefore, the investors in which ought to be secured, like investors in every other form of commercial or financial undertaking, against unreasonable or confiscating legislation."

Mr. ASQUITH: The hon. Member did not quite finish the quotation. I think, if my memory serves me aright, that I did say that some people take very different views of what confiscation is.

*Mr. CAVE: I am afraid they do. I have dealt at some length with this reduction part of the Bill, because I think that it is not sufficiently understood, and that it deserves careful consideration. In dealing with the time-limit I can be briefer, for my task is simpler. As the House knows, the proposal is that after the fourteen years any application for the renewal of a licence is to be treated as an application for a new licence and the provisions of the 1904 Act as to confirmation and monopoly value are to apply. One of the Ministers—the Secretary to the Admiralty—told one of his audiences that this was simply a proposal to revert to the pre-1904 conditions, but I do not think he will say that in this House. Before 1904 a licensee who wanted renewal was not bound to appear at petty sessions unless he had notice of objection. Under this Bill he must go there every year to fight his case, not only against temperance objectors, but against any others who may come and bid against him. Before 1904, if an applicant got his renewal it was final. Under this Bill it is nothing of the kind. If a licence is renewed the renewal has to be confirmed and the applicant must fight his battle over again before the county committee at his own expense. Again, before 1904 no applicant for renewal paid a farthing for monopoly value. Under this Bill he must pay the full monopoly value of the licence. Therefore no one can say this is a reversion to pre-1904 conditions. Nor is it true, as has been said, that a time-limit in this sense was proposed in this House in 1904 and voted for by Unionist Members. The proposal then made was something quite different. It was simply that after a certain number of years, seven or fourteen, the provisions for compensation should cease and the licensee was to revert to his former position. That is totally different. I do not want to dwell upon that, but I want to consider for a moment what is the meaning of monopoly value in this Bill, because I believe, and I am the more convinced of it after what the Prime Minister has said, that there is some misunderstanding as to the effect of the Bill. It arises from this. The Government have taken a phrase from the Act of 1904 and have applied it to a totally different subject-matter. The definition of monopoly value in the Act of 1904 is "the difference between the value which the premises will bear in the opinion of the justices when licensed and the value of the same premises if they were not licensed." If you apply that to a new licence, a licence of premises in respect of which no goodwill exists, that difference does pretty well represent the probable value of the licence. But if you apply the same expression to an old licence, the result is very different, because in that case you are dealing with a house which has been licensed and carried on for some time and which has attached to it a goodwill which may be very valuable, and if you apply these words to that particular house, you will find you are taking, not the mere value of the licence itself, but the value of the licence and the value of the goodwill. I believe that every lawyer will say I am right.

MR. ASQUITH: I say not.

*MR. CAVE: Then I must withdraw that particular prophecy. But at all events, I gather from what the Prime Minister said that even he sees a flaw in this part of the Bill, and if he does not intend the Act to have the effect which I say it has, I think he owes it to the House to make the matter clear, not only on the debate on the Second Reading, but in Committee, if we ever get into Committee. I believe the effect of the Bill as it stands will be that the State will take the value of the licence and of the goodwill also. A very good authority, Mr. Rowntree, who is a friend of the Bill, has calculated the monopoly value taken under the Bill as £19,000,000 a year. I do not know whether he is right or wrong, but one would like to know whether that is something like the estimate of the Government.

SIR THOMAS WHITTAKER (Yorkshire, W.R., Spen Valley): When did he do so?

*MR. CAVE: In an article published in the *Socialist Review* for this month. Looked at from this point of view, this part of the Bill is not a temperance proposal at all, but a proposal for a fiscal change, because it assumes that the sale of liquor will go on, and that the profits will go to the State. Temperance will not be promoted by this proposal. The argument used is that you are resuming public control. You are not resuming public control. You are assuming to the public the profits of the trade. It is there that we put our finger on a blot on this part of the Bill which, I believe, must be fatal to the proposals of the Government. In the sense in which the Bill proposes it, I do not accept a time-limit whatever the time-limit may be. Of course, I am only speaking for myself. A genuine proposal under which, after a certain time, the absolute freedom of justices with reference to licences should be restored, I would very gladly consider, but this is not such a proposal at all. It is a proposal that after a period of fourteen years the State shall take into its own hands, not only the absolute control of licences, but the profits and goodwill of the trade. The proposal is that after fourteen years the licensee will pay for his licence. Is that equitable? I say the licensee has paid for it already. Most people now holding licences have bought them in the market. Some have bought them from a public department. I need only mention the "Coach and Horses," Portsmouth, and that is not the only instance. There are many cases where people have bought their licences from the public in a more direct sense. For instance, people have gone to the bench for a new licence, and have said: "If you give us a new licence we will give up one or two old licences." Very often for that purpose they have bought old licences in the market sometimes at £1,000 or £2,000, and have surrendered them in exchange for a new one. Yet now they are to pay for the new licence over again. There is a still stronger case. In this book of statistics under the Act of 1904, certain people are shown to have applied for and obtained new licences on paying not an annual sum but a capital sum for monopoly value.

There are three cases in the book relating to Glamorganshire where licences have been sold by the licensing authority, in one case for £3,000, in another for £4,500, and in another for £6,000. These are annual licences, and yet under this Bill these licences are not only to be subject to refusal with a minimum of compensation, but must after fourteen years be bought from the public over again. Does anybody believe that a man gives £6,000 for one year's licence or even for a licence for fourteen years? Is it fair or just that after taking from him the full value of his monopoly, you should make him pay the same price over again? I am not going to discuss at length the question which the Prime Minister touched on to-day as to whether a licence is property. There was a time when the same question was raised about goodwill. It was said that goodwill was not property, but was merely the expectation that the old customers would continue to resort to the old place, and therefore the duty ought not to be paid on it nor could it be protected by the Courts. The good sense of our Judges has long since disposed of that question, and goodwill is treated as property in every sense. A licence is an advantage attached to property and bearing a reasonable expectation of renewal during good conduct, and upon the faith of that expectation money has been expended, buildings have been erected, and businesses have been built up. Is it right to take away that advantage without giving fair compensation? Take the case of the public-house buildings, many of them of great value. Before a man puts up buildings he goes to the magistrates and says: "I am going to put up these buildings, will you grant me a provisional licence?" Plans are approved by the magistrates and he gets his provisional licence and puts up buildings which may cost £2,000, £5,000, or £10,000. Does anybody think he would do that if he thought he was likely to have his licence forfeited in a year? If that were so, it would be true to say that the licence of a London theatre, which may have cost £100,000 to build, and may be let for £5,000 or £6,000 a year, may be taken away because it is a mere revocable licence. Legally, it may, but equitably and honestly no one can say that it should be. One other point. It has been said: "How inconsistent to say on the one hand that owners are going to be ruined, and, on the other hand, that drinking will go on." That has been said many times, and yet there never was a more palpable fallacy. The answer is perfectly plain. Drinking will go on. That is part of the policy of the Bill. Beer will be made and sold, but the State and not the owner of the house, will take the greater part of the profit. Then it is said: "At all events, you can set aside a sinking fund." That view was encouraged by the Prime Minister in his speech in introducing the Bill, in a passage which he has repeated to-day, and which led us to believe not unreasonably that the limit of fourteen years had been arrived at upon a basis that would give sufficient time for the owner of the house to put by enough to replace his capital. If the figures are looked into it will be found that that period is not nearly enough. Figures were given the other day by the hon. Member for the Walton Division of Liverpool in reference to tied houses, and I have here similar figures relating to other houses. But I need not dwell on that because the Prime Minister, as I understand, has given up that point. He was asked by the hon. Member for Kidderminster whether the period of fourteen years was based upon any actuarial and statistical data. His answer was that the period was not founded on any such data, and he added—

> "The reduction period of fourteen years was adopted as being of a reasonable length, regard being had to all the circumstances of the case, many of which are not of such a character that they could be given any precise mathematical expression."

I can well believe it, and many of us can guess what those circumstances are. The fact is that you cannot justify this part of the Bill, except on a principle which is not accepted even by all Socialists, namely, that if you only give notice you may confiscate any interest you wish. What the Member for Blackburn said in the article from which I have already quoted is this—

> "The other valuable feature of the time-limit is that it establishes a precedent by which,

> without compensation by or cost to the community, a private monopoly may be transferred to the State . . . . This precedent furnished by non-Socialists is one which will not be forgotten when public opinion regrets the anti-social privileges conferred by our forefathers and ourselves upon land monopolies, railway monopolies, mine royalty monopolies, and all other monopolies foolishly handed over to private individualists by the community. As a Socialist I have never advocated a time-limit. I have been prepared to treat the drink monopoly as I would other evil things like landlordism and capitalism, and give fair consideration to private interests which the folly of the people has allowed to grow up and even to make some considerable social sacrifices for the good to be gained by the transfer of those interests to the community. But if individualists are determined to abolish private monopoly by a time-limit without monetary compensation I see no reason why as a Socialist I should oppose this convenient precedent."

There are many hon. Members opposite who might very well take that statement to heart. I have left myself no time to deal with the minor provisions of the Bill. To me local veto has always seemed to be the least reasonable of temperance reforms. The clauses with regard to clubs, I think, are somewhat insulting, and they are admittedly ineffective. The proposal to empower justices to forbid the employment of barmaids is also I must say a little insulting to an honest and hard-working class. I should be sorry if those who have supported the right of women to vote were to go into the Lobby and deny to these women the right to work. I do not understand why Ireland, which was said by the Royal Commission to require restrictions on drinking more than any other part of England, is omitted, or why Scotland is omitted. Speaking for myself, I think that the clause relating to children will receive fair consideration in every quarter of the House, and my only regret is that it is not found in another Bill already before the House—the Children Bill—where it might have been discussed at leisure. But I rest my opposition on the two points which I have mentioned, and I believe that it is by these two main proposals that the Bill must either stand or fall. We on this side of the House would view with favour any proposal which would really diminish the intemperance of the country, while doing justice to individuals, but this Bill is unjust. If it were passed, I do not believe that because of it there would be one drunkard the less in England. But even if it were otherwise, if you could prove that the passsing of this Bill would appreciably reduce the amount of intemperance in this country, still I say that in order to accomplish that great good, I would not have the House do this great wrong. And if you taunt us, as you do, with the finding of the Royal Commission that hardly any sacrifice would be too great in order to diminish the evils of intemperance, I accept the statement in that form, but I say that there is one sacrifice which, even for that purpose, we ought not to be asked to make, and that is the sacrifice of the old rule and tradition of this House that even-handed justice shall be meted out to all the inhabitants of this realm. I beg to move.

*MR. EVELYN CECIL (Aston Manor): I beg to second the Motion. My hon. and learned friend has criticised this measure with great and conspicuous ability, but I will venture to add a certain number of additional reasons why the Bill should be rejected, to which I hope the Prime Minister will do me the honour of paying attention. Seldom has a Bill been brought before this House containing a professed object so entirely at variance with its real effect. Its professed object is temperance, but its real effect is to attack the trade. It is a perfectly legitimate trade, which has as much right to be carried on and which has been carried on as legally and properly as any other trade. Those sitting on the Opposition side of this House do not profess to be in special alliance with the trade, but we do say it ought to be treated as justly and fairly as any other trade. We urge that this particular trade ought not to be penalised, that sober people ought not to be penalised simply because some of their fellow citizens are disgusting enough to get drunk. For the sake of these drunkards we are not prepared to support the Government in confiscating an industry largely without compensation which has been built up relying upon the good faith of the State. I should like by way of preface to say that temperance reform is not a Radical monopoly, because we on these benches are just as keen to reform drunkards as hon. Gentlemen opposite, and we wish to leave no stone unturned to accomplish this object; but we do not believe that the method proposed by this Bill is the right way to do it. Hon. Gentlemen opposite maintain that this Bill will attain that object. If so, why do they not extend the Bill to Ireland and Scotland, where the statistics show there is more drunkenness than in England? Why do they not also extend the provisions of the Bill so as to include grocers' licences? If this Bill is passed it appears to me that English brewers will have to put up the price of beer in order to provide for compensation and for the confiscation of their property, whilst their Scottish and Irish rivals will be able to undersell them. The Motion calls attention to this Bill as failing to promote the cause of temperance and violating the principles of equity. It is an iniquitous Bill, and I entirely associate myself with what my hon. and learned friend has said with regard to the time-limit. I have no hesitation in answering the Prime Minister's question by saying that I do not accept the principle of the time-limit. I think fair compensation ought to be paid, and it is essential that it should be paid. The country gave its opinion on this subject in 1895 when it pronounced with no uncertain voice on the principle of the Bill of 1893. Under this time-limit of fourteen years only one-third of the trade will be compensated whilst the two-thirds which will have to subscribe to the compensation fund will be extinguished without any compensation at all. Almost from time immemorial, from 1495, it has been the practice to extinguish licences for misconduct. For the last 150 years it has been the practice of licensing benches not to refuse to renew licences unless misconduct has been proved, and I do not know why this custom is to be departed from to-day. Where licences have been renewed from year to year something very like a vested interest has been created. The wording of the Memorandum of the Inland Revenue in 1890 expressly assumes that the licence will be renewed. All the explanations of the Inland Revenue Commissioners are based on the assumption that the annual licence will be renewed, and that is a material factor in considering the compensation and treatment which the licensing trade should receive. If the practice has been wrong, are hon. Gentlemen opposite prepared to refund all the unfair rating and death duties which have been paid up to the present time? Magistrates have frequently compelled structural alterations to be made and have granted licences on the condition that such alterations were made. Would they have compelled those alterations, and would those conditions have been accepted, if they had assumed that those licences would not be renewed annually? Again, we hear that investors in brewery stocks are mere speculators. It is a favourite argument of hon. Gentlemen on the opposite benches. I entirely deny that many of them are speculators. It is a matter of common knowledge that many of the investors in these stocks are insurance companies and banks, and I cannot conceive that anyone in his sober senses would say that, as a general rule, either insurance companies or banks are speculative concerns. On the contrary, they are managed with extreme caution, and these investments were certainly made on the ground that they were safe and secure. But even granting for the sake of argument that investors did not sufficiently consider all the future, I think you are bound to suppose they considered that, while one or two licences might not be renewed in consequence of misconduct, they had no reason whatever to assume that all licences would be swept away at one fell swoop. No person, however little a speculator, could have assumed or had any intuitive knowledge to believe that all the licences connected with the breweries in which he has invested were bodily to be swept away, and that no compensation would be given. It is one thing to invest in a concern of that kind knowing that here and there a licence might be refused, but quite a different thing to say that the investor could reasonably assume that all the licences were to be taken away as this Bill proposes to do. Then we are taunted with bringing forward the argument about the widow and the orphan, as if they did not exist. There are plenty of such widows who do exist, and there are plenty who will be extremely hardly hit if this Bill passes into law in its present form. There are many who have invested in breweries, and there are many who are in a more hard-up condition than the ordinary investor. Only the other day a case came to my notice in which a widow had been left by her husband a public-house, not very far from London, which had been perfectly well conducted, and against which no cause of complaint had ever been found. It was valued roughly at something like £15,000, but it was necessary to repair it to a great extent, and her trustees applied to the Court to sanction the borrowing of £10,000 in order to carry out the repairs. The Court looked into the circumstances of the case, and sanctioned her borrowing the money. She accordingly went to a well-known bank and borrowed the £10,000 she required to put the house in order. Immediately after that this Bill is introduced. What happened? The value of these premises, even at a liberal estimate, is not more than about £6,000, or £7,000. The bank immediately called in the mortgage, because they will necessarily lose on the new valuation, and the woman who has invested all her little savings in the house, being unable to obtain a continuation of the mortgage, is utterly ruined, while the bank itself loses considerably on the money it had lent. That is a case of a very serious character, and not, I believe, an isolated case, but it very clearly shows the evil and unjust effects of such a Bill as this. Under the principle of the time-limit we know that almost anything can be done. My hon. and learned friend has read some of the socialistic proposals and has referred to the way in which this proposal is likely to be used as a precedent. No doubt it is a very convenient course to fix a time-limit within which all institutions—all property—are to be compensated to some degree, and then to be taken over —"resumed"—without compensation. If that is to be done with land, railways, and mines, why should it not be extended to personal property? Why should banks themselves not be nationalised on a similar system? I cannot for the life of me understand why hon. Gentlemen opposite are prepared to introduce such a precedent as this when it is one of the greatest danger, and might be applied to any useful industrial concern. Supposing that they secured State management for all public-houses, are they quite sure that it will be efficient? Let the House remember that State management means insecurity of tenure, because it means that since a licence is merely annually to be renewed the licensee may very likely be turned out at very short notice, and the effect of that will be that the best licensees will not go into that kind of trade at all. You will abolish the most respectable publicans now carrying on the trade, and you will find only the less respectable and those more inclined to be subject to precarious notice willing to take service under State management. The Prime Minister has said something about extending the fourteen years limit, or being willing to be squeezed to some extent on that particular aspect of the question. I should like to know whether the Prime Minister would not be reasonable, and be prepared to put down an Amendment enabling brewers to borrow in the same way as municipalities do from the Government, allowing for a low rate of interest, and a sinking fund to exterminate the capital in sixty years or some such similar term. The State has done it as regards municipal bodies. If they wish to exterminate licences, why not apply that principle to the brewery trade?

Mr. ASQUITH: Ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

*Mr. EVELYN CECIL: If it is a question of money surely justice comes before money, and either this proposal ought not to be brought in at all or sufficient money ought to be forthcoming to give compensation to the dispossessed trade. Then again, the portion of the trade the heaviest hit after fourteen years is undoubtedly the most respectable. It will be the fittest who will survive and it is those who will have to pay the full monopoly value for renewal or be extinguished without compensation. Another iniquity of the Bill is the loss of employment it will inflict. Assuming that under each licence on an average five people are employed, and that some 32,000 licences will be extinguished by this Bill, it means that 160,000 persons will be deprived of their employment and will have to find it elsewhere, in trades perhaps to which they have not been trained at all. Still another iniquity of the Bill is the position of the Licensing Commissioners. I believe the Government do intend to alter that. I think it is most improper that the Licensing Commission should not be responsible to the House of Commons as is proposed in the Bill as drawn. There is no means of controlling their action, for, as the Bill at present stands, their salaries will not appear in any Estimate coming before the House.

Mr. ASQUITH: That has been altered.

*Mr. EVELYN CECIL: I am glad to hear that at any rate one of the bad provisions of the Bill is to be changed. Then there is the question of the use of the Bill. It is contended that the Bill will promote temperance, but we do not think that it will really promote temperance. Is this Bill really wanted? The country, I am thankful to say, has been becoming more and more sober for many years past. Since 1870 the number of public-houses, fully licensed, has been reduced from 53·3 per 10,000 of the population to 27·9. Of course, within the last three years, since the Act of 1904 has been in operation, the reduction has been extremely rapid. Last year 2,010 licences were extinguished, and the average for the last three years was 1,311. Why not give the Act of 1904 a fair chance of working? It is admitted on all sides to be working very well, and it does seem, not merely unjust, but extremely gratuitous, to put in force fresh measures for extinguishing these licences. I venture to say that in a very few years we should find that the Act of 1904 would do everything for temperance that this Bill is ever likely to do. The number of licences, also, is not by any means an invariable guide to the amount of drunkenness. The statistics show how utterly fatuous any assumptions on that basis really are. In the Blue-book on Licensing Statistics recently published it is stated that Cambridgeshire has now 74·95 licences per 10,000 people. According to the Schedule of the Bill the new allowance will be only 25 per 10,000 people, so that in Cambridgeshire there are three times more licences than the standard, while convictions, according to statistics, are 12·7 per 10,000 of the population. In the West Riding of Yorkshire there are 24·60 licences per 10,000 people, but the convictions there are 74·22, or more than six times as many as in Cambridgeshire. In the City of Gloucester there are 33·37 licences per 10,000 people, and under the Government proposal it should only have twenty. The convictions there are only 9·73 per 10,000. West Ham has now only 7·17 licences per 10,000 people, but under the Bill it would be entitled to double that number, and the convictions for drunkenness are already 43·8 per 10,000 of the population, or more than four times higher than Gloucester; so that in a temperate place the Bill makes numerous reductions, and in a less sober place it makes none at all, or positively allows an increase. These statistics show the ludicrous absurdity of trying to fix a hard and fast line as is done in the First Schedule of the Bill, of which the modifications are quite illusory. You do not necessarily promote temperance by reducing the facilities for obtaining drink. I am quite sure that the character, tone, and geographical position of a town or district have quite as much to do with it as the number of licences—probably a good deal more—and in abolishing these licences you affect a large number of side interests, such as those of commercial travellers who make use of these licensed premises for the purposes of their business. If you are going to reduce the number of licences you will introduce secret drinking. [Ministerial dissent.] There can be no doubt that that will be the case. Remember, the Bill prohibits the grant of new licences, but does not prohibit the establishment of new clubs. The magistrates cannot refuse to register new clubs merely because there are other drinking facilities in the neighbourhood. It is very remarkable that since 1904 the number of clubs registered has largely increased. The total number of registered clubs is now about 7,250. In 1905 there was a net increase of 132, in 1906 186, and in 1907 240; so that the tendency of clubs to increase when the licences are reduced is already proved by statistics which the House possesses. And it is likely that clubs will increase. Clubs have no licence duty to pay, no compensation fund to which to contribute, no restriction of hours, and there is but slender police supervision over them. Therefore, there is a direct inducement to a vast multiplication of low-class clubs which will be able to be open all night and where the police supervision is of the slightest. There are, moreover, clubs to which public attention has recently been called in which, to say the least of it, not too appropriate entertainments are given on Sundays and Good Friday. It will be a great misfortune if bogus clubs are to increase at all. Already, also, the club promoter is looking about. He sees that in a wide extension of clubs he has the opportunity of financial profit. I am sure it must be the object of hon. Gentlemen opposite, as of hon. Gentlemen on this side of the House, to avoid passing a Bill which is likely to give rise to such an unfortunate condition of affairs. I should like to suggest one or two other criticisms in respect to clubs. The Prime Minister, in reply to my right hon. friend the Member for Croydon, on the 1st of this month said that—

> "The club clauses of this Bill have for their principal object the exclusion of bad clubs from registration. There is no intention to hamper the liberties of *bona fide* clubs."

The intention may be excellent, but I do not think it is at all likely to be carried out, because the clauses are insufficient to eradicate ill-conducted drinking clubs while degrading well-conducted clubs. There ought to be a distinction made between clubs which are not conducted in good faith and those which are: and I would suggest to the Government that they ought to consult respectable clubs before these clauses are passed into law. There are numerous provisions which such clubs object to. They object to the transfer of the control of clubs to the licensing justices instead of being as at present in the hands of the petty sessions and the Metropolitan magistrates. The licensing justices in some districts have strong antipathies. They object also that a common informer, not on oath, should be able to lodge a complaint which would force the club in any year to prove its right to renewal of the registration. The man might be a discharged servant, a spiteful political opponent, or a blackmailer; and it is most unjust that any such persons should be given power to object to registration of a respectable club merely to gratify personal spite. Then respectable clubs object to being searched by disguised police spies. They have a strong feeling that such ought not to be the case. It calls to mind the days of search warrants condemned by Lord Mansfield 140 years ago; and I am surprised that any Government in these days should introduce anything analogous to that procedure. There is another provision in, I think, Clause 39 in which the secretary to the club is made responsible for misconduct and not the committee of the club. Surely the committee should be made responsible for bad behaviour and not the secretary. In all these respects I think gratuitous insults are levelled at respectable clubs. It is possible that some additional remedy of the existing law may be found which might do good and which might promote temperance; but I do not think that this Bill is the way to do it. I think it possible that something might be done in the direction of combining or co-ordinating the refreshment trade with the licensed trade; but it is not necessary for me here and now to express a definite opinion on that. Of one thing, however, I am quite sure, and that is that public opinion far more than legislation is likely to be efficient to promote temperance. Make people feel, make them realise the disgrace of drunkenness rather than legislate against liberty. Foster voluntary self-control; and better housing has also a bearing on the question. This Bill appears to me to do the maximum of harm to the trade, and to bring the minimum amount of reform to the drunkard. If it passes at all, which may be doubted, it certainly will not pass in any form resembling its present shape. Moderate restrictions, in the history of the world, are what have always been proved to be most successful. Excessive severity provokes evasion; and excessive laxity creates indulgence. Hon. Gentlemen opposite, in their zeal for temperance, which is an excellent cause, are apt to lose sight of the claims of justice, which is a quality of equal worth; and injustice may parade in the cloak of virtue, but it cannot keep up the disguise.

Amendment proposed :—

"To leave out from the word 'That' to the end of the question, in order to add the words, 'this House declines to proceed further with a measure which, while failing to promote the cause of temperance, violates the principles of equity.'"—(*Mr. Cave.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

*MR. LEIF JONES (Westmoreland, Appleby): Last year the Leader of the Opposition, whose absence from this debate we on this side of the House deplore as much as hon. Gentlemen opposite, was good enough to express some solicitude as to the state of mind in which I should find myself in the early part of this session. He feared, he said, that the Government would not fulfil the pledge they had given, and next he thought I should not like the Bill when I saw it. I am thankful that his solicitude may be relieved on both points; and I want to express on this, the first opportunity given me, my gratitude to the Government for their fulfilment this session of the pledge they gave to place this question in the forefront of their legislative programme. It has been not without difficulty and against some pressure that they have done so, and I think that they are entitled to our gratitude for so fulfilling their pledges. The question whether I should like the Bill or not was also raised by the right hon. Gentleman, and therefore I venture to tell him that I like it very much. I desire to congratulate the Government upon the courage they have shown in this Bill. The right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister told us to-day that he was not surprised or intimidated by the outcry with which the Bill was received, and I think that before the end of the session is reached he and the Government will reap the reward of their courage, and that therefore the Opposition may learn from observation if not from experiment that courage in politics does sometimes pay. Their Government in 1904 preferred to surrender to the brewers and they reaped their reward in 1906. [Ironical OPPOSITION cheers.] Hon. Members opposite may jeer, but I believe that the conduct of the late Government towards the justices and the surrender which they made to the brewers in 1904 had more to do with their defeat in 1906 than is generally supposed. A shock was given to the moral sense of the nation which was by no means forgotten when the general election came round: and I think this Government has strengthened its position by taking its stand at the head of the moral forces of the country. The Amendment of the hon. and learned Member declares that the Bill does not tend to promote the cause of temperance. I noticed, both in his speech and in that of the seconder of the Amendment, a warm tribute to the cause of temperance and a declaration that if the Bill made for the good of that cause it would have no more earnest supporters than themselves. I have listened to many temperance debates in this House, and I have never heard one in which the mover or seconder of an Amendment did not declare that he was more devoted to the cause of temperance than those who were supporting the Bill, but they have always found that the particular measure which is before the House is one which will not forward the cause of temperance. Outside this House the same method of opposition to this Bill is being pursued by various people. We find that the stockbrokers will have nothing to do with this Bill because it will not promote temperance. I notice, too, that the hon. Member for Hammersmith has been at the pains of collecting the names of a number of solicitors who were against this Bill, because they said it would do nothing for the cause of temperance. I wonder why it has not occurred to that learned profession, for which I have a great respect and which we all consult in certain difficulties, that they make themselves ridiculous by their claiming to pronounce whether this measure is or is not in support of the cause of temperance. If they had given us a lecture on licensing law we might have listened to them, but when they undertake to tell us what is good or not good in the cause of temperance we cannot pay attention to them. There are some bodies in this country who have some claim to be regarded as experts on this temperance question, and those are the temperance societies. There are many of them who for seventy or eighty years have been working in the cause of temperance, and at the present moment all these societies, which have had their differences in the past and which in dealing with this great national evil of intemperance have suggested different remedies—all these societies are supporting the Government Bill. That is a most remarkable result, and I do not know of any Government Bill on this question which has ever been in that proud position before. That does not mean that this is the Bill of the societies, because it is not their Bill, or that of any or all of them, but the whole of the temperance societies in the country recognise on the part of the Government a statesmanlike attempt to solve a difficult problem, and therefore, sinking all minor differences, they are ranged behind the Government on this Bill. In their judgment, and I claim they are quite as good judges as the hon. Gentleman opposite, it is a measure which makes for temperance reform, and they believe that the reduction proposals of the Bill are of a beneficial nature. They do not express the opinion that reduction alone is going to solve the problem of temperance, and I venture to think that the quotation from Mr. Gladstone which the hon. and learned Member gave has been often somewhat misused. Mr. Gladstone, in his letter to Lord Thring, was not arguing against reduction; on the contrary, it is well known that he was in favour of reduction, but he said that reduction alone is not enough and that reduction, if pretending to the honour of a remedy in itself, was little better than an imposture. You must try other things, and he, in the course of his career, tried other remedies, some of them successful and some of them unsuccessful, and he never supposed, and I do not think anyone ever supposed, that the mere reduction of licences in this country could be a complete remedy for the evils of intemperance. And then let me say with regard to the statistics which have been quoted that I agree with the hon. Member that they are of very little value as proving the use of reduction, for this reason, that there are too many attendant circumstances in regard to reduction and in connection with arrests for drunkenness—circumstances having regard to different police and different magistrates—to make any comparison between different localities of much value. I do not think, therefore, we have material for estimating what is the real effect of reduction in various parts of the country. But where you have the opportunity of comparing is in a place like Liverpool where the justices deliberately set themselves to a policy of reduction, and at the same time to a policy of strict administration, with this result, that whereas at first there was an increase in the number of convictions because of the stringency of the administration of the law, as time went on and the reduction was carried into effect the convictions in Liverpool became reduced far more than in proportion to the reduction of licences. I believe that that will be the experience everywhere. The hon. Member quoted the majority Report of the Commission. He referred to one extract, and I will refer to another in which they said that it could not be denied that in enormous districts throughout the country, if not universally, owing to past lax administration of the licensing authorities, or in some cases because of the diminution of the population, and especially because of the unlimited increase of beer-shops between 1830 and 1869, an increase over which the licensing authority could exercise no discretion, there was at that time a considerable congestion of licences. They, therefore, regarded a large suppression of them as essential, and though I admit that the majority did not recommend the particular form of reduction of so many houses to so many hundred or so many thousand of population, nevertheless they did suggest that you should have regard to the density of the population and to local considerations—difference between town and country and so forth —such as are taken account of and embodied in the scheme of the Bill. Therefore I think it is not possible for the hon. Member to justify his contention that there is nothing in the majority Report to support the proposals of the present Government. But while we are having this reduction, not solely because it is going to reduce the temptations to drinking, I do think that it will reduce those temptations in certain places, and that is a consideration which ought not to be lost sight of. It is a consideration which was very much pressed upon the Royal Commission by the evidence of many witnesses, including the new Member for North-West Manchester in his salad days. He emphasised the great value of reduction in diminishing temptation to those who happen to be the victims of the drinking habit. Then, again, the reduction is valuable from the point of view of administration of the liquor laws generally, as it raises the standard. When the process of reduction is going on it raises the standard of the houses in the locality in which it is going on, and there is a sort of competition among the licensees that their houses should be better managed than those of their neighbours, so that when the magistrates are framing their schemes of reduction their licence should not be the one which is taken away. I admit that the force of that has been very greatly weakened by the compensation system set up by the Act of 1904, but it is still desired by the licensees in most cases, though not in all, to have their licences renewed, and there still is the pressure when reduction is going on to raise the standard of conduct of licensed houses. Again, it renders supervision easier on the part of the police and of the licensing authority, and that is a matter of importance. In regard to our licensing system, we start from the proposition that the trade is a dangerous one which requires to be carefully regulated and watched, and if that is not conceded in this House there is little common ground upon this question; but conceding that, it is of great importance that houses should not be in any undue proportion in any particular locality, since it makes administration and supervision very much easier. I should have thought that provided they got the compensation value settled to their satisfaction the trade had no reason to object to the reduction of the number of licensed houses throughout the country. Where a place is over-licensed, and we all agree that some places are over-licensed, they will gain by having the number of licences reduced to a reasonable proportion to the population, and from that point of view I do not think they can object to the reduction. I also fail to see how any supporter of the Act of 1904 can, after all, object to reduction when they passed an Act in which the very aim of its supporters was to bring about a large reduction. We were told by the seconder that this reduction was going to bring about a large amount of unemployment, and, although I should regard that if I thought it was true as a very serious objection to the Bill, I do not accept the figures he gave as to the number of people who are likely to be thrown out of employment by passing this Bill. He estimated five to every licensed house and said there would be some 10,000 annually thrown out of work as the result of the passing of this Bill. I think that estimate is preposterous. I can find no ground for calculating that there would be any such number. I should think the number would be a little over one to every house. It must be remembered that under this Bill it is not the largest and most important houses which are going to be closed, and in many country districts at any rate, in the case of a great many houses, the licensee has another occupation. He is often a blacksmith or small farmer or painter, or is carrying on some trade, and there is no reason to suppose that in the case of every licence reduced someone will be thrown out of employment. I should say, instead of 10,000, between 2,000 and 3,000 would be far nearer the true figures of those who will have to seek employment. But even that number is worth considering. I do not lightly throw 2,000 or 3,000 men out of work in these times, and I ask myself what prospect is there for them to find employment. I find that there are a great many transfers in this trade; I cannot tell the exact number. The Home Secretary has been asked for it, but we have not yet been able to get it. I should put the number of transfers at not less than 3,000 a year, that is well within the mark, and that number alone would suffice to make openings for these men. ["How?"] When there is a transfer a new occupant is proposed, and in such cases the old occupant often has difficulty in getting employment again owing to his having 'spoiled his record and lost his character, but the men now in question would be men of excellent and unblemished character, and they would get places. But I do not want to press that point too far. Then there are a large number of deaths in this trade, which is the most dangerous industry in the country. ["Oh!"] I do not state that on my own authority, but though I have not the figures by me, the Registrar-General calculates the mortality figures in different trades, and I find that of all the industries of the country far and away the most dangerous is that of selling liquor over the counter to people in our large cities. The people who live longest in this country are the clergy and ministers of religion, because they are good. Lawyers, good as they are, do not live so long as ministers of religion. Whilst ministers of religion are at one end of the scale, potmen and barmen are at the other. The brewers are pretty low down, but the potmen and barmen are at the bottom. From that cause alone there are many vacancies in this business, not less than from 5,000 to 6,000. Therefore, from that cause alone you have ample vacancies to swallow up the men who lose their employment by the reduction in the number of these houses. All that will be necessary is that two or three thousand young men should go into other trades. The money spent in liquor is largely drawn from that required for the necessaries of life, and if it were not spent in liquor it would be spent on furniture, clothing, and other necessaries. Therefore, from the diminished consumption of drink there would arise a demand for these articles in other trades. That is the experience of countries where they have had the wit to banish the liquor shop. They find in those countries that there is a demand growing up for other articles. The phenomenal growth of no-licence areas in the United States, New Zealand, and Australia is not due to the mere spread of teetotalism. It has arisen from the fact that business men have found out that the diminished opportunity for spending money on liquor leads to increased demand for other materials. If I might borrow a term from the Stock Exchange, a slump in liquor means a boom in every other industry. The hon. Member complains of the changed basis for compensation, but to my mind that is one of the very best things I find in this Bill, and one of the most just. I cannot find any justice whatever in the present system. In the Return granted to my hon. friend the Member for the Spen Valley with regard to the compensation paid for houses suppressed in London, I find houses which have been paid compensation amounting to 120 and 130 times the annual assessment for local purposes. There can be no justification for such compensation as this. The "Golden Fleece" at Bermondsey received £8,598 as compensation for the non-renewal of the licence. The house is still in the possession of the brewery company, who can let it as a shop and no doubt get considerable rent for it. That house, with its licence, was assessed at £67 a year for the London rates, and the compensation was close upon 130 times that assessment. In that case one of two things must be admitted. Either the compensation given was too great or the assessment for the local rating purposes was far too small. The trade can take their choice. They can either be assessed at the proper annual value for the purposes of the rates which they help so much to create, or else when the time comes they will receive less compensation. They cannot have it both ways. They must pay and be paid on the same basis. I will not argue the question of the publican very much. He will receive more compensation than at present, and his position will be better in this respect, that when this Bill becomes law it will go far to destroy the tied house system. An hon. Member complained that certain hon. Members of this House had gone round appealing to the publicans of the country to support this Bill because it would be beneficial to them; I think they have done quite rightly, because the Bill will go far to end the tied house system. Now, let me turn to the time-limit. As I understood the hon. and learned Member, he does not object to the time-limit in the sense in which the words were used so much in this House during the debates on the Act of 1904. I am glad that he has drawn attention to the two-fold character of the time-limit, because I agree with him. The time-limit in this case is two-fold. At the end of fourteen years the compensation arrangement set up in 1904 is to come to an end. I always thought the State made a mistake when it entered into that business at all and helped the trade to insure itself. I believe the trade was quite competent to insure itself, and if it had been left to itself we should have been better off to-day. But with fourteen years notice, I think they will be able to insure themselves at a small cost just as they were able to insure themselves prior to 1904. For the purpose of considering the time-limit from the other point of view we may put the Act of 1904 on one side, and suppose it had never been passed. It is contended by hon. Members opposite that the State has no right at the end of any period of years to change the system of the taxation of the liquor trade, because that is what the "monopoly value" of the houses amounts to. It amounts to putting a tax of some magnitude on the trade at the end of fifteen years from now. Reference has been made to the two lines of criticism supposed to be contradictory, namely, the statement that the brewers are going to be ruined, and that the consumption of beer is not going to be less. Those statements appear to destroy each other, but that really is not the case, because the brewers are affected by this Bill, not solely because they are brewers, but because they are the owners of licensed houses. They have changed from brewers into speculators in licensed houses. That is the root of the opposition to this Bill. Much of the talk upon this matter would seem to throw on the Government the responsibility for the depression of brewery shares. It has been pointed out by *The Times*, which is certainly not a great friend of the Government or of this Bill—it is not in the leading columns certainly—but in the financial and commercial supplement where one is supposed to find facts it has been pointed out that it is not this Bill that has killed the brewery market:

> "The market was dead before, and dead as the result of the speculation in tied houses which culminated ten years ago and has been collapsing ever since."

The predicament in which the brewers find themselves is not of our creation, and they have no right now to ask us to stay our hand in order that they may have more time to get back what they have lost in speculation. They knew what they were doing; they knew that the monopoly value which they were buying was a most precarious value. I have had several circulars sent to me; I have here a circular from Meux's Brewery Company, from which I find that the paid up capital is £2,000,000, of which £1,500,000 is debentures and preference stock, and £500,000 ordinary share capital. Of the debentures and preference stock I find that only £8,861 is held by the licensed and allied trades. That was sent to me to impress upon me the number of widows and orphans who would be ruined by this Bill, but it makes a very different impression. It shows me that the brewers knew very well what they were investing in, and they have sold out to a less instructed public. They knew perfectly well that the monopoly value was most precarious; it depended on the law remaining as it was. They had no right to assume that Parliament was not going to alter the law. Parliament has perpetually altered the law in regard to the liquor trade. If you look at the Statute-book you will find that hardly a year has passed without some law being placed upon it which affects the liquor trade and its profits. Very stringent laws are passed sometimes. Mr. Ritchie, who sat on that side of the House, in 1882 was instrumental in passing a Bill which brought the beer off-licences under the discretion of the magistrates, and many of those beer-houses were closed without any compensation being given. That was done without any time-limit and without any compensation whatever being provided. Parliament has never parted with its right to legislate on this matter; it is the one thing which it has got in return for the monopoly value granted for nothing. The monopoly value depends also on the habits of the neighbourhood. When a great advocate like Father Mathew arises, the consumption of drink sinks to almost nothing in the neighbourhood where his influence is felt.

Monopoly value depends also on the action of the justices. I am sure the hon. and learned Member will not deny that the justices were free, if they chose, to grant licences to all and sundry who applied. They tried in Liverpool the experiment of free trade in licences, and the result of it was that there was no monopoly value left in a licence, because the monopoly value depended solely on a continuance of the policy of restriction. It has not been contested, and cannot be contested—I am not going to enter into a legal argument—that the justices have a full discretion to refuse the renewal of the licence of an individual house if they think fit to do so. Therefore, in buying up any licensed house it is clear that the brewers were purchasing a most precarious interest. They ran all those risks because of the high profits which they thought they would make. All I can say is that, if they have not written down the value of the licensed properties as they bought them—many of them have, I know—it is one of the most scandalous chapters in the whole history of rotten finance, either in this or in any other country. They ought never to have paid those high values for precarious properties, and they ought to have written them down by a large percentage each year after the transaction. But, instead of doing that, they have distributed large dividends, and disposed of shares in their companies to a confiding public, and I hold that they must bear the blame for any difficulty which widows and orphans may at present experience. I think this monopoly value is enormously exaggerated in all the current talk. I think in the estimates that are made of it a great deal is reckoned which is not monopoly value at all; and I was very glad indeed to hear the statement made by the Prime Minister to-day that he had it in his mind to try to give some clear definition of what this monopoly value is. I believe that in the estimate of £100,000,000, or thereabouts, ordinary profits are included; but as I understand it, it is not the intention at all to include in the monopoly value anything except those extra profits which are conferred upon the liquor trade over and above all other trades, as a result of monopoly. I believe, for the purpose of writing down that monopoly value, the limit of fourteen years is a generous one. I noticed that the hon. Member for Walton in his speech on the First Reading of the Bill did not expect such a generous limit. He had prepared his figures on the basis of a ten-years limit, which, I imagine, was the basis on which he expected the Government would start. Personally, I wish the Government had chosen ten years, a limit which would have met the justice of the case. The Government have been most generous, I claim, to the trade, and, if anything, they have not perhaps been quite careful enough of the great interests of the nation. Certainly, if there be a failure anywhere, it is not towards the liquor trade but rather towards the nation. But the trade in the time-limit allowed can easily, I think, write off the monopoly value. I am glad to see that they are already making an attempt to do it. I understand that a great brewery company in Watford have declined to renew their subscription of 10s. 6d. a year, which they have contributed for some thirty years to the Ragged School Fund to provide a holiday outing for the children. For thirty years they have paid the subscription without grumbling or demur, out of the gladness of their heart and the fulness of their pocket, but now, without warning, without a fourteen years limit, with only twenty-four hours notice, they have cut off that 10s. 6d. I do not complain. They are within their rights. But so are we within our rights in proposing that in fifteen years from now the nation shall be in a position to make a new arrangement with regard to licences. I welcome very heartily the local option proposals of the Bill, and, unlike the hon. and learned Member who moved the Amendment, I regard with the greatest hope the application of this principle. I believe that when the people get the power into their hands they will use it for the better regulation of the trade, and for the improvement of their own condition, just as do the people of the United States, and of our Colonies. The local option provisions will operate immediately in regard to new licences, and that is a point which has been much emphasised by my hon. friend, the Leader of the Labour Party in this House, the Member for Barnard Castle. He has pointed out that working men very often invest their savings in house property, and, with the aid of cheap transport, they take their families to live in places where there are no public-houses. But, unfortunately, in too many cases the brewers' agent follows them up, and sometimes precedes them, and working men, having invested their money in houses situate in areas where they hoped to be free from the public-house, find that they have not escaped it after all. This provision for local option in regard to new licences will be of great importance in the growing suburbs of our cities, and the people will be able to keep them free from public-houses, if they desire to do so. Let it be remembered that when a public-house comes into a neighbourhood other property goes down in value. I noticed in the speech of the Prime Minister, in introducing the Bill, what I venture to think was an error. He said that you could arrive at the value of a licensed house by comparing it with the value of the house, exactly similar, next door, but without a licence. That, I think, is a fallacy. The moment you grant a licence to one of two houses exactly similar and next door to each other, that house which has not got the licence immediately becomes diminished in value. Indeed, a great part of the value of licensed property in this country is positively sucked from the surrounding property. We have this proved by the rents which are obtained in districts where there are no public-houses. Not only is there to be local option with regard to new licences, but it will come into operation with regard to all licences at the end of the time-limit. On this point I would like to ask the Government a question. Section 2 of Clause 3 provides that—

> "Local option shall, after the termination of the reduction period, become exercisable in such a manner as Parliament may determine, both as to prohibition and as to the limitation of the number of licences."

What I want to ask the Government is this: As I understand it, if no fresh legislation be passed by Parliament, the licences, being new licences at the end of fourteen years, will become subject to the local option provisions of Clause 2; that is to say, the majority of the population may decide by their votes that there shall be no licence in their neighbourhood. I ask the Government if they can give me an answer on that point. ["It is so."] I am told that it is exactly as I have interpreted the Bill, namely, that unless Parliament does legislate, this local option becomes automatically operative under the provisions of Clause 2. That is a provision to which we attach the utmost value, because the Parliament of some future day, not being like the present one, might not be so keen to entrust the people of this country with the right to veto licences. Let it be remembered that to those who advocate temperance, local option is the one great issue between the forces of temperance and of drink the world over. It is by local option that the people of the United States have been successful in vetoing the liquor traffic. In the debate on the First Reading, statistics were quoted to show that local option had not diminished drinking, but I noticed that the licensed trade in America became so alarmed by the results of local option and prohibition in the States that they summoned a great convention which met a month or two ago. Its purpose was to put the trade right before the American Press and public, who had misunderstood that trade, and to offer to assist towards obtaining a model licensing law for the solution of the great problem of regulating the liquor traffic. That does not altogether look as if they were satisfied with the progress of local option in the States, where some 36,000,000 are living to-day in no-licence areas. Another feature of the Bill to which I attach value is the increased power which is given to the local licensing authority. Power is given to the local licensing authority to put an end to on-sale of liquor on Sundays. I do not see why the option should not be the other way, and that there should be complete Sunday closing unless the justices decided otherwise. I accept the justices as the authority, but there is a certain amount of inertia about the benches in some parts of the country, and I cannot but think it would be better to enlist on the side of Sunday closing all the power of inertia which resides in them, and only enable them to escape from Sunday closing if they actually take the trouble to do so by administrative act. Then I should have preferred to see election day closing made statutory instead of being left to the magistrates. That has been tried in many parts of the world, and there is only one testimony in regard to it, that elections are purer and more satisfactory where this disturbing element is removed from the electoral system. Another point on which I welcome the words of the mover of the Amendment is the exclusion of children from public-house bars. I think Members would be almost unanimous in strengthening this clause. Whatever you may think of public-houses as a resort for grown-up people, they are not nurseries in which our children should be reared, and if the Government could see their way to make the exclusion of children under fourteen from public-houses a statutory provision in that part of the Bill there would be little or no opposition in this House. In regard to clubs, may I say I think these provisions at all events have not been wholly understood by the people of the country. They have been criticised from two points of view. One is that they are too drastic. By the way, the seconder of the Amendment managed to combine both points of view in his criticism. The second is that they do nothing to check the evils which exist in clubs. Very great powers under them are given to the licensing justices. They have power to close any club which in their judgment is used mainly or wholly for drinking purposes. I think that is a very large power to place in the hands of any body of men, and if they desire, and I have no doubt they will desire it, to put down bogus drinking places—clubs merely for drinking purposes—they have full power under the provisions of the Bill as it stands. I noticed the hon. and learned Member for Liverpool made a most eloquent speech outside this House almost entirely taken up with the weakness of the Government Bill in this matter of clubs. I want to assure him that I would support him most heartily in any Amendment which he might think fit to propose to strengthen the clauses of the Bill in regard to clubs. I am sure the wish of the Government is to go as far as the House will support them in going in this matter, and I should be only too happy to place my services at the disposal of the hon. Member. At the end of the time-limit, when the Bill has been in operation for fourteen years, we shall reach a licensing system on what Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, in his speech to a deputation in 1906, called a clear logical basis. Then the system will recognise that the trade exists for the people of this country, and that it never was intended that the people of the country should be the victims of the trade. They will have the right to decide for themselves whether or not the trade shall be carried on in their neighbourhood. If they so decide the number of houses will bear some reasonable relation to the requirements of the population to be served, and the local authority, the licensing justices, will be armed with great power to protect their districts from bad methods of carrying on the trade. That is a system which will be a vast change for the better, and for which, I think, the country will greatly and heartily thank the Government. I know how strong is the trade agitation against the Bill. It is well organised, but it is on a very narrow basis, and in my study of the protests I have received against the Bill I have found very few which did not come from people who are in some way or other interested in the carrying on of the trade. The circulars and letters that come to me are very nearly all from brewery companies or investors. I have to remind myself that there are other interests to be considered in this matter besides those of investors in the liquor trade and those who are interested in carrying it on. The trade opposition to the Bill has not been altogether scrupulously exercised. Threats are held out to the bishops of the withdrawal of subscriptions, and have met with a dignified protest. When the Bishop of Birmingham speaks in support of the Bill he is instantly reminded that he would not be a bishop to-day if it had not been for the brewers' subscriptions, and that there will be no more cathedrals built if the Bill goes through. The threats of boycott to traders, which were recommended at the great Queen's Hall meeting, are no idle threats. They are being carried out. I have brought with me a notice from a brewery, which has been circulated through the North with orders for goods to the tradesmen—

"In sending you this order we may respectfully call your attention to the proposed Licensing Bill which means, if carried, the ultimate extermination of our trade, when orders from brewers must cease. Soliciting your opposition to this unjust proposal, we are, yours faithfully, the Newcastle Breweries, Ltd."

Mr. YOUNGER: Where is the threat?

*Mr. LEIF JONES: Implied, not expressed. Do you deny that there is an implied threat?

Mr. YOUNGER: Yes, certainly.

*Mr. LEIF JONES: Then I am glad you are not a trader. Traders have no difficulty in realising the threat. What meaning has this if it is not a threat?

Mr. YOUNGER: It is a fact.

*Mr. LEIF JONES: The fact sent to a trader in a small way has made the trader so nervous that he has sent it on to me asking whether this sort of thing is fair. I should be thankful if I could have the support of the hon. Member in explaining to the traders in the North that this is not a threat but merely a statement of the expectation, of the brewery company, that it is no threat, implied or expressed, and that the orders will go on just the same as long as they have the money to give the orders. I shall be grateful for the support of the hon. Member in making that clear. The traders of the country, unfortunately, who depend for a living sometimes on these orders, are more stupid than the hon. Member and read a threat where he thinks none is meant. All I can say is that the traders are entitled to protection from this sort of treatment by the trade, and I shall be thankful if as a result of my bringing it before the House that protection is promised. But there is more than that. It is not only the traders who are threatened. We here are all threatened, and the candidates at elections are threatened. I think it is an evil thing for this nation that a particular trade interest dares to send to Members of Parliament such letters as I have been receiving. It is a national danger, and therefore I ask the Government to support public men and Members of this House against this narrow, bitter trade opposition. After all, if the opposition is strong, so is the support for the Bill. The Prime Minister stands to-day in a proud position, for he has at his back in this struggle, which I regard as nothing less than a struggle between the forces of good and evil in this country—I place it no lower than that—he has at his back practically every agency for uplifting the people that is to be found in this country. The Churches are behind him, with the Archbishop at their head, and the Nonconformist ministers vieing with one another in the support which they give to the Bill, and temperance societies, which after all have no selfish end to serve. I heard the right hon. Gentleman opposite cast a jibe which, I thought not worthy of him, at teetotallers. What have teetotallers to gain through this agitation?

Mr. JESSE COLLINGS: When the hon. Member talks about threats from the brewers, we receive as candidates or Members more threats from the temperance societies than from the brewers.

*Mr. LEIF JONES: I did not know it. I am told that we are an insignificant minority of the population, incapable of putting pressure to a successful extent on anybody. But it is a very different thing to put the pressure of persuasion, which is all teetotal societies have to put, and the financial pressure which can be put by others. The Churches are behind the right hon. Gentleman, the temperance societies, which have worked at this problem and at last see some solution within their grasp, are with him. The trade unions, to whom all Members of the House pay homage for what they have done for the working classes, are behind the Government in this matter. The Labour Members to a man, I believe, are supporting the Government Bill. The co-operative societies and, I confidently claim, every agency for uplifting the people of the country are behind the Government. Let the Prime Minister persevere with the Bill and his Government will be remembered hereafter as a Government which staked its existence to deliver the country from the grip of a dangerous monopoly and prevailed.

MR. BARNARD (Kidderminster): I am sorry the last speaker should have ended his speech by fancying that those who do not agree with him are prompted by unworthy motives. I can assure the House that as far as I am concerned I have no share or any interest of any description in matters affecting this trade, but I happen to have been associated with it twenty years ago, and it would be a very mean and cowardly thing if under those circumstances I did not try to say one word in connection with a subject which to some extent I understand. It appears to me that the last speaker is very much mistaken in supposing that the brewery companies of this country have intentionally in any way whatever misled the public or tried to make them invest in their shares. I am very sorry myself that the Act of 1904 was ever passed, because I dislike its having taken away the magisterial discretion. But at the same time that Act established three principles: first, it established compensation from the trade to the trade; secondly, it created the position to-day in connection with granting of new licences, of which I think we all approve; and thirdly, it dealt with the ante-1869 licences which I, for my part, should have liked the Prime Minister to have mentioned in his speech, and I should be very glad if the last speaker had dwelt upon that point a little more. I am not going to try and deal with the big principles which are involved in this measure, but just to point out one or two minor points which I fancy may be easily overlooked. The Conservative Party dislike this Bill because it touches the rights of property, but they need not talk so much about that, because in the Act of 1904 they deliberately took away the rights of 30,000 licence-holders which, before, nothing could have taken away except misbehaviour. The Member for Blackburn says he likes the Bill because it establishes the elementary points of some form of socialism. I dislike the Bill because I do not think it does what it professes, and in a great many ways it does that which it does not profess to do. There are four different means of distributing liquor, the clubs, grocers' licences, steamboats, and public-houses. I do not want to touch further upon clubs, but I distinctly put it to the House that the Bill appears to single out public-houses and leaves the other three means of distributing liquor out of consideration and does not treat them in any way with the same severity. It is a mockery to say that a policeman may, just when he pleases, march through these clubs. It is certain that the uncontrolled clubs are getting rid of an enormous quantity of alcohol at the present time, and if we get rid of another 30,000 houses this evil will become still more pronounced. It seems to me that the Bill does not apply the same principle to the other three distributors that it does to public-houses. The bishops say that they do not want anything unfair, either in the time-limit or in the business considerations. The Prime Minister has been reminded of a speech he made in the City in which he stated that he desired to have regard to the rights of property, and that the Government were willing to give a business consideration to the parties concerned. But that is just what the Bill does not do. The principle of the time-limit and its interpretation is a thing which, in my opinion, is not well understood. Up to the present I always thought that the time limit meant coming back to the position before the Act of 1904, and now I find that it means something quite different. It means that at the end of fourteen years the monopoly position is to come into force. The hon. Member for the Spen Valley Division says that the brewers will not be injured because they will do the same volume of trade. Quite so, but they are doing it now under conditions with which we are well acquainted. I am not going to prophesy, but already the weak breweries are in trouble. People who have invested money in these breweries are inclined to withdraw it, and before the end of the time-limit is reached the trouble will become something gigantic and terrible. The last speaker asked

"Why don't you insure?" It is difficult to insure now, but at the end of fourteen years it will be still more difficult. If you consider the way in which people have traded from the beginning up to now it appears to me that everything that the brewers and publicans have done has been done in the open with perfect frankness. Nothing has been concealed, and public-houses have been openly bought and sold, taxed and rated. I wish to make good the point that it was well understood that publicans have a right, and they had been led to expect a renewal of their licences. It has been said by the hon. and learned Member opposite that this Bill does not appear to be based upon any scientific or actuarial method. It appears to me that we have a right to expect something more than a mere arbitrary decision as to the time-limit and the other matters included in this Bill. There is another inconsistency with regard to local option. If we are to have local option then let us have it. When we hear complaints made about the effect of beer during an election why have not the Government the courage to legislate upon this question? It is a very regrettable thing, if the Bill remains as it is now, that we should leave it to 960 licensing benches to decide what charge they shall make in the future against these licences. That proposal is altogether out of place, and the Government might very well take upon themselves the duty of dealing with this question. The matter of redundancy is not of great importance if accompanied by right conditions. I would sooner leave this matter to the locality than draw the hard and fast rules which are placed in the Bill. There are two points to which I wish to refer, namely, compensation and the time-limit. As to compensation, the system of the Bill is to take the rate-book and find what the valuation is. The hon. Member for the Appleby Division says the rate-book cannot be relied upon. That is the fault not of the owner but of the rating authority. If any of us knew of houses rated below their proper value we should not feel ourselves called up to tell the Assessment Committee. If I take the figures which have been quoted here, the Chancellor of the Exchequer's idea, the view of the Inland Revenue, or the last idea of Lord Justice Kennedy, what does it amount to? You have been told that the sum is a mere fraction; but why should the Government mind if the trade is providing the money? What can it matter to the Government which system is adopted if the money to pay for it comes from the trade? I was glad to hear the Prime Minister say that the tied house tenant would receive greater consideration under this Bill than under the previous measure. I think we should have this point put more definitely than a mere reference to the Inland Revenue Commissioners, and it should be put in a form in which we can understand it. The Prime Minister drew special attention to this great monopoly and dealt with free houses. The last speaker, who is an expert on temperance, said that he had no quarrel with the free houses. There are however only about 7 or 8 per cent. of this class of public-houses in the country. In the town I represent, out of 124 houses there are no less than 84 free houses belonging mostly to little breweries. Under this Bill they will be reduced from 124 to 50, and it stands to reason that the effect upon them will be very terrible. In the case of these small breweries, if the licences of these public-houses are taken away the trade of the breweries will go also; consequently, I hope that further consideration will be given to the effect of this particular section. I am very sorry that I cannot see eye to eye with the Government upon this matter, but I welcome the announcement that the Prime Minister is ready to accept Amendments, and I hope he will strengthen the Bill by treating all the distributors of drink alike. I trust he will alter the method of calculating the compensation, and make clear what his treatment of tied houses is going to be. I want the Government to do something for the free houses, and if the time-limit is to remain, I hope it will be made clear that they are to have the first option and the choice of the monopoly value when fixed so that they may go on in the future.

SIR JOHN KENNAWAY (Devonshire, Honiton): I have all my life been deeply impressed by the national evil of intemperance, and filled with an earnest desire both in and out of Parliament to do something to alleviate it. On my first election to Parliament, thirty-eight years ago, speaking on this evil in Exeter, I said that we had to consider how, without abridging individual liberty, and with due regard to vested interests, we might so regulate the liquor traffic that it should be a blessing and not a curse. Looking back upon the many years that have since elapsed, it is melancholy to observe how little has been done, and the causes of this inaction. In the first place, the trade seems very generally to oppose anything which appears in any way to limit their powers and discretion. On the other hand, I cannot agree with the hon. Member for Appleby when he says that because the temperance societies approve of this Bill it must be right. I think that in many cases temperance societies, instead of advancing the cause of temperance, have hindered it, because they have again and again opposed good measures on the ground that they did not go so far as they would have liked. In looking back at the attempts at legislation, I find that the first matter that came before us in Parliament was a question of local option. We all recognise the great efforts of Sir Wilfred Lawson in this direction. We know how he brought that matter forward again and again, and how the House would not listen. My first speech in the House was made on that question. I earnestly desire to help forward the cause of temperance, but I could not support the proposal of local option, and I think the judgment of the House has affirmed what I did. Then we had the Licensing Bill of Mr. Bruce, which effected a good deal in the way of shortening hours and in many ways greatly benefited the cause of temperance. After that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham brought forward a Resolution in favour of the municipalisation of the drink traffic. The right hon. Gentleman did me the honour of asking me to second the Resolution, and I did so. It was rejected by a large majority, and it has never been attempted again. The next occasion on which the licensing question came to the front was when Mr. Ritchie's Bill proposed the establishment of local authorities, and it will be remembered that in setting up county councils he gave them power to diminish or to close unnecessary public-houses. To carry out that power he put an extra tax of 1s. on every barrel of beer sold. What happened? The temperance societies and the whole temperance forces of the country, led by Mr. Caine, raised such a cry that the clauses had to be dropped. If that had been carried into effect there would now be in the county of Devon 300 public-houses less than there are at the present moment. The extra 1s. on a barrel of beer had already been voted, and Parliament had not power to take it away, and so the tax which was intended for the purposes of compensation was applied to technical education. I cannot but feel that a very great hardship was done to the trade at that time in putting this tax upon them. It has never been taken off. It was applied to technical education, and the cause of the failure of that power to close public-houses was the temperance party. Then came the appointment of the Royal Commission which sat for five years and went into the matter most fully. I think we must have continually before us one of their recommendations, as follows:—

> "It is an undeniable fact that a gigantic evil remains to be remedied, and hardly any sacrifice would be too great which would result in a marked diminution of this national degradation."

After that Report, any Government could hardly help taking up the question and attempting in some way to deal with it. Any Government that takes it up has a right to demand that there should be impartial, if not favourable, consideration given to its proposals, in view of the difficulties of the question, and the risk to them which the taking of it up involves. I would ask, was there anything like impartial or fair consideration given to the Bill of 1904? It was opposed from the first in every way, and thereby what might have been a very good Bill was not properly and fully discussed. There is no doubt that that Bill required amendment. I quite agree with the hon. Member for the Appleby Division that on the question of the assessment of compensation it needed amendment, but the principle I maintain was the right one. That principle ought to have had a fair trial, and with amendment the Bill would have done much to improve the position of the licensing question. After all, when we come to deal with the question, it is not merely a matter of pious sentiment or pious aspirations; it is a question of what is just and right; it is a question of what is practicable and what is common sense. By these principles I should like to try this Bill. In the matter of justice, I think it has been shown that it does confiscate altogether the interests which are affected, or at least take away a very large portion of their property. If there was anyone more earnest than another in the cause of temperance it was Archbishop Temple, and he said at a great meeting at Exeter—

> "There is a feeling abroad that you contemplate an act of injustice to your fellow-countrymen. I say you will never succeed nor deserve to succeed in your attempts at legislation until you have disabused the public mind of that impression of injustice."

That impression of injustice is very strong at the present time. If this evil is to be dealt with, why should it be done by confiscating interests? Why not pay compensation? When England made up her mind to grapple with the question of slavery in our Colonies she did not hesitate to lay down £20,000 000 to carry out that principle of justice. Why is it that now a different course is to be taken in attempting to carry out the recommendation of the Royal Commission which said that—

> "Hardly any sacrifice would be too great which would result in a marked diminution of this national degradation."

But the sacrifice of a money payment to those whose interests are to be taken away is deemed a sacrifice too great, and therefore the simpler plan of confiscation is adopted. The question has largely turned on the time-limit. Many of us in 1904 voted for a time-limit. I did so myself, but the time-limit then proposed was very different from that now proposed. I was doubtful of the effect of the 1904 Bill, and in voting for the time-limit I guarded myself at the time by stating that after a short time there should be power to revise the Act, and to say whether it was working rightly or wrongly. The time-limit then proposed was intended to secure full control of the trade with a view to a further reduction if the country saw fit. I do not think it ever contemplated the confiscation of the monopoly value which it is now proposed that the surviving houses should pay. Then there is the question—Is it a temperance measure? Will it not result largely in the substitution of clubs, not open to inspection or control as in the case of the regulated public-houses? The Prime Minister showed in his speech on the introduction of the Bill that he was alive to that. The clauses contained in the Bill provide for increased control being given to the Justices over clubs, but if I understood rightly the reply which the right hon. Gentleman gave the other day to a deputation, he has given in to the clubs altogether, or to a large extent, and he has undertaken to remove from the Bill those provisions which would allow of clubs being satisfactorily dealt with.

MR. ASQUITH: That is not so at all.

SIR JOHN KENNAWAY: I am very glad to hear that that is not the case, because the question of clubs is a very serious one. The suppression of public-houses hitherto has resulted in the establishment of clubs, and the drastic proposals of this Bill will, I am sure, result in the establishment of clubs. Those clubs ought to be properly dealt with. How can you subject clubs to the restrictions which apply to public-houses? How can you limit their hours, occupations, or amusements, or the days on which they are to be open? The Financial Secretary to the Admiralty will be able, I hope, to tell us something about clubs for which, I think, he is responsible in Camberwell and other places, where, judging from the accounts which we read, most remarkable proceedings take place on Sunday, as well as on other days. I believe a reduction in licences is a desirable thing in itself, but if you go beyond or contrary to public opinion, you will do more harm than good to the temperance cause. It is not commonsense to go so far beyond public opinion as this Bill really does. Might not a Bill be agreed upon which would do a great deal in this direction without upsetting and arousing the whole feeling of the country in the way that has been done by this Bill? I think the question of the severe punishment of the drunkard ought to have been dealt with. I think the five-shilling fine which has been inflicted in the past is absurd; that on a second conviction there should be a heavy punishment; and that for a third offence a man should be confined in an inebriate home or some place where this malady can be treated. I think there is much need for a stronger public opinion for the enforcement of existing penalties against publicans who break the law. The earlier closing of licensed premises would do much good in many towns and I think that that could be carried out with considerable beneficial effect. These are practical measures which would do much to diminish the evils which we are all anxious to lessen; but the Government have not been content with that. They have gone in for heroic measures. In listening to the speech of the right hon. Gentleman in introducing this measure I felt tempted to quote the expression made use of by a French officer who looked on at the Balaclava charge: "C'est magnifique, mais ce 'est pas la guerre." The Bill embodies a splendid and glorious idea, but it is certainly impractical and visionary in its character. I am afraid the Government have been caught and let in on the principle of confiscation. I consider that confiscation is applied in this Bill. I look to another measure of the Government, which I believe still survives, and that is the Education Bill. There the Government deliberately confiscates thousands of schools belonging to private individuals and trusts and takes them for the public service without any compensation whatever. These are very dangerous principles for a Government to enunciate and seek to put into a Bill. I see it has been said that this is a matter which is likely to spread a good deal further. It has been said that if you confiscate the property of some brewers, why not that of all brewers? And then the Socialists would go on to the confiscation of manufactories and railways. One thing comes after another. Once sanction is given to a dangerous principle, there is no saying where it will end. The country is not prepared to go such a length as this Bill invites them to go. I believe that the Bill, while having good aims, has gone the wrong way about securing them. Much as we admire the courage of the right hon. Gentleman and of the Government, much as we join in the sentiments expressed by the hon. Member for Appleby as to the great evil caused by drink and desire to meet it, I believe that this Bill does not go the right way to do it.

*SIR J. DICKSON-POYNDER (Wiltshire, Chippenham): In rising to support the Second Reading of this Bill I do not desire to go at any length into many of the provisions embodied in it with regard to temperance. I think that all sections of the House are in favour of temperance, and if it can be carried out on fair and equitable lines it will receive general sanction. There are many provisions in the Bill which, obviously, will make for temperance in the future. There is, first, the limiting of the hours on Sunday; secondly, the proposal to exclude children from the bars of public houses, and I hope that that clause will be strengthened in its various stages through the House and that it will be made compulsory. Thirdly, the regulation of clubs will, I think, meet with the sanction of the House. We are all anxious to have the clauses dealing with clubs very materially strengthened. I should like myself to see a licence duty imposed on clubs as it is on licensed houses; and I think something in the direction of closer regulation of clubs should be made, especially of those particular clubs which derive their revenue or a large proportion of it from the profits on the drink sold therein, as distinguished from the revenue derived from subscriptions. I think that in cases where two-thirds of the revenue are derived from the profits on the sale of alcoholic drinks, they should with perfect justice be placed on the same footing in respect to regulation as public-houses. Before the termination of the debate I should like to have further informaton as to how temperance on the lines proposed in the Bill can be effected without imposing an undue burden on the trade, for I am confident that the most certain way to ensure temperance reform in this country is to establish it in such a way as to avoid, by every means in our power, an undue sacrifice and severity on those concerned in the reform. In approaching this question I do not do so in any hostile spirit to temperance reform, but with the most earnest desire to secure it on lines of reasonable equity, and that is the only way in which it can be secured in this country. There are two main principles in the Bill, viz., the compulsory reduction of licensed houses within a prescribed period of time, subject to compensation; and the ultimate resumption by the State of those houses after the time-limit. With those two principles I am fully in sympathy and entirely approve of them. In 1904 when the subject of a time-limit was before the House I, with other hon. Gentlemen now on the Opposition Benches, voted for that particular principle being embodied in the Act of that year. That Act undoubtedly directed attention to the reduction of public-houses, but it was marred by the refusal of the then Government to introduce a time-limit. By that refusal they precluded any guarantee that a really substantial number of licensed houses would be reduced over a reasonable period, whilst the second effect on the licensed houses that were left was to emancipate them from any close control by the State. The more houses are reduced under the Act of 1904 without a time-limit, and the more the remainder are emancipated from State control, the greater the value of these houses will become. The Leader of the Opposition in 1904 admitted by his Act that there were too many public-houses for the requirements of the country, and in the interests of the trade itself; and although the present Act has made a very good start in the direction of reducing the number of public-houses—for I think 1,100 have been reduced every year since the Act came into operation—the very weakness and incompleteness of the machinery of that Act must render it impossible to maintain that scale of reduction or the character of that reduction where it is most wanted, owing to the lack of funds that must result from the process of the necessary proceedings, as was pointed out by the hon. Gentleman who in a most interesting speech moved the rejection of the Bill. The most redundant and least valuable public-houses have been extinguished, whilst the licensing magistrates will find themselves more and more reluctant as years proceed to extinguish the remaining public-houses, owing to their increasing value and the lack of funds. The argument has always been advanced that redundant public-houses have a direct bearing on the amount of intemperance in districts. That was admitted in 1904. Undoubtedly that is the case, because where the public-houses are redundant the publicans are induced, owing to increased competition, to use undesirable methods in the sale of their drink. Therefore, in that respect, I fully agree that there is a direct bearing between redundancy of public-houses and intemperance. But I am not quite prepared to put it so high as some hon. Gentlemen. I would put it as one of the potent contributing influences of intemperance; but an equally important influence is the density of population in a district and the insanitary character of that district, both of which conditions induce drunkenness in an active and virulent form. This opinion has been borne out by the Home Office Returns. It is equally important that the State should establish a practical machinery to reclaim for itself that thorough control over public-houses which it possessed but has never enforced in days gone by. There had, however, arisen a deliberate policy in many districts of encouraging the granting of licences rather than the contrary. This, of course, accentuates the difficulty of now reclaiming for the State complete control of the licences. I prefer to call it control of the licences, rather than use that hackneyed phrase which nobody understands, but which I hope will be explained to us before the end of this debate, "monopoly value." "Monopoly value" conveys some ambiguous idea, but the control of the licences by the Sstate is perfectly unambiguous. It is idle, moreover, to talk of monopoly value and deny, at the same time, the continuance of a licence from year to year. So much for the two main principles of the Bill, with which I am in complete agreement; but let me deal for a few moments with the proposals as to compensation. The provisions which I am going to deal with may be deemed details to be dealt with hereafter on the Committee stage, but they assume such great importance in their proportions that they become almost principles. In dealing with a complicated question such as licensing, you cannot concentrate your eyes upon temperance with any hope of realising real temperance, without taking note of the effect which that reform must have on the industry concerned and those interested in it as investors. To ignore the latter is to risk obtaining the former, and in the course of your policy you may incur such unpopularity that you will deprive yourself of the power of carrying through the reform. It is argued that under the financial proposals of this Bill the whole of the principles upon which the rights of property are based are involved. Though I think that argument has been a little overstated on public platforms and elsewhere, still at the same time I think there is a good deal of truth in it. The rights of property in this democratic Parliament, of course, are looked upon in varying ways by those who sit on the various benches. Some, undoubtedly, exaggerate their sanctity, some underrate it, but I refuse to admit, in this instance, whatever may be said to the contrary, that I exaggerate it because I refuse to accept in my argument that the licence is an annual licence, that the investment has been purely speculative in the past, and that the trade has been warned of impending legislation. But although, of course, the licence is in theory an annual licence, in actual practice everyone who has had any experience of the licensing bench knows that, provided the holder of the licence has behaved himself and conducted his house properly, whenever that house came up for the renewal of the licence, it has always been granted; and, therefore, although it has been an annual licence, throughout the country in practice it has been something more than that. Having conceded so much, however, there appear to me to be very important points in the Bill which I will venture to deal with successively and which, I think, should undergo some change in the course of the Committee stage. First, I will deal with the precise basis of valuation for compensation under the Bill during the period of compulsory reduction. In the first place, what is a fair basis of compensation? A fair basis of compensation is that which will meet the actual loss incurred by the reduction. The present basis of the 1904 Act as interpreted by Mr. Jus ice Kennedy is, I think, admitted on all hands by those who are conversant with licensing benches to be largely excessive in its amount. The 1904 Act lays down the method by which that compensation is to be arrived at, but the way in which it is interpreted by licensing benches to-day is excessive. They take an average of the profits on the beer and whisky sold for the three years previous, and that is multiplied by ten to allow ten years profits to run. That is taken into account, and having deducted the amount which relates to the house itself, as distinguished from the house as it is licensed, the amount is multiplied by eighteen years purchase. The result in almost all cases of this mathematical calculation is that an excessive valuation is come to, and the result would be, if this goes on in its operation for a period of years, a very considerable diminution in the number of houses reduced owing to the insufficiency of funds. But if that is too high it appears to me that the proposal of the Bill estimates the valuation of the premises on too low a basis. It lays down the proposition that the annual licence under Schedule A, which is the assessment for the rent, shall be estimated according to the number of years that are to expire within the fourteen years period. We have seen a number of tables and we have also had many figures given us by hon. Gentlemen on the other side of the House, showing the enormous disparity which exists if it is worked out under the present Act or under the proposals of the Bill. Whether these figures are accurate or not, I am unable to say, because although during the recess I have taken the trouble to try and arrive at the method by which this second calculation is to be made, I am bound to say that I have totally failed in my endeavours. If these figures are correct, I think the disparity between the two calculations will appear in most people's minds to be too great, and that something should be done to bring together these two extremes. It seems to me that it might be done in two ways. It might be done by maintaining the present basis of valuation, although I have no doubt my right hon. friend would demur to that proposal, because it would involve a complete redrafting of Clause 10 of the Bill, or it might be done by making an Amendment in the present clause, which would authorise the Commissioners of Inland Revenue to arrive at the true and proper assessment of these premises under Schedule A, because in many cases they are not assessed at their proper rental value. Whether a proper assessment, if a provision were introduced in the Bill to that effect, would give a basis which would realise a figure nearer to the one which would be just as between the present basis of compensation and the proposed one, I am not prepared to say, but I must say that something should be done to ensure that a higher basis of valuation should be given in this case. The basis of ten years profits is too much, but if you were to multiply the profits by six years—not the brewer's profits, but the real profits of the public-house—it seems to me that you would arrive at something like a proper amount of compensation which might be granted in respect of a house upon its extinction. I leave that point, because in the discussion of the Second Reading one cannot go into details as to how it could be worked out in Committee, but I do hope that something will be done in Clause 10 to bring about what in my judgment would be a more equitable basis. If it is necessary to have a higher basis of compensation it will require a larger fund being provided by the brewers, who have got to find the money, and this brings me to the second point, which is that the period during which compensation should be paid should be extended over a greater period than fourteen years. We have received from many sources information as to how it would work out at fourteen years, and I think there are many hon. Members on this side of the House who would gladly welcome an Amendment which would give more generous treatment, and probably twenty-one or even twenty-five years would not be too much as the time during which compulsory reduction should be made and compensation given. It must be remembered that we shall at the end of the time-limit reach the period when all redundant public-houses will have been extinguished throughout the country, as 32,000 are to be extinguished. There will be a corresponding increase of the population during that period and therefore I think it may fairly be assumed that the number of the houses which will then exist will about correspond to, or not be sufficient in many districts to meet, the requirements of the population. Therefore from a temperance point of view the reduction of houses will have been carried out and the number surviving will only be that which is, reasonably speaking, the requisite amount for the population of the day. I do not think that those who are enthusiasts in temperance reform should look with too keen an eye on the actual number of years, because what difference can it make in the history of the country in regard to the great reform of temperance whether it is fourteen years or twenty-one; and certainly if, by extending the period from fourteen to twenty-one, you are able appreciably to lighten the burden on the trade concerned, you will correspondingly facilitate the passage of this measure not only in this House, but in another place. There is one more point which I wish to bring before the House in connection with the Bill, and that is the position of the surviving houses at the expiration of the time-limit. As I understand the provisions of the Bill, at the expiration of that period those 62,000 odd houses have first of all to undergo a general local election to decide whether or not they are to continue in existence, and when they have passed through that ordeal they will come up before the magistrates who in their turn will decide whether the licensee or someone else is to be granted a licence. It must be remembered that they have been paying their share of the compensation throughout the time-limit. What is to be their position at the end of the time-limit under this proposal? Here again money has been spent quite properly by those who have invested it in a perfectly legitimate concern, and they have every right to hope that throughout their time they may, if they so desire, withdraw from that business and have a possession which shall be a realisable article in the market, so that if it is put up for sale it will sell for a figure which is within reasonable distance of what they have invested in it. But it seems to me that by this Bill that is taken away. What is wanted at the end of this time-limit is that the State should get complete control over the licences. It seems to me that, provided they get the control, the arrangements made by the State through the bench of magistrates do not much matter. I think these houses that are left might be granted leases under the State for a period, say, of five years. That could be done quite consistently by the State without impinging on the temperance principles of the Bill. Because I think you are far more likely to get a respectable man to manage a public-house if he knows he is there for five years, than if you have a man who has to come up every year for a licence, and knows he may be turned out any year. I think, therefore, a lease of five years under the State would meet the case in every way as regards control, while at the same time it would be in the direction of temperance. It is on these three points, on which I lay special stress, that I venture to speak this evening. Of course, as regards new licences full control may be introduced. I have nothing to say against imposing most stringent conditions with regard to those, but as regards these old licences, after all that has taken place for their reduction and when a levy has been imposed on the trade, I think more generous treatment should and might be meted out to them in the Bill. It may be said that these are matters of detail, but I believe they are also matters of great principle. I believe the points I have brought forward are the main essentials of the Bill, because without these modifications I do not see how this Bill can pass both Houses of Parliament. I am sincerely anxious that the Bill when it passes this House shall not show any provision which does manifest injustice to the trade or any person connected with the trade which would have to be amended in another place. I believe that upon the extension of the time-limit, the enlarging of the basis of compensation, and the position of these houses after the Bill becomes law—on the modification of Clauses 1, 3, and 10—largely depends the fate of this measure. The object of those who sit on this side of the House, in the laborious weeks which lay before us, should be so to mould and fashion this measure that when it leaves this House it should present a permanent and just scheme of temperance reform such as can be accepted and defended by all reasonable people in the country.

*MR. SNOWDEN (Blackburn): As very frequent references have been made to myself in the progress of this debate I should like an opportunity of explaining my position in regard to this matter. I approach the consideration of this question from the point of view of temperance reform. I can speak, I think, also in the name of those with whom I am associated. We recognise the great necessity of removing every stumbling block from the path which makes for the social and moral betterment of the people. This Bill is not a panacea for all the evils of drink, but so far as it is a temperance measure, it seeks to promote social reform in the direction of curtailing the opportunities of obtaining drink. Quotations have been made from an article I wrote, with the object of giving the impression that I hold the opinion that the reduction of facilities is not likely to cause a reduction in intemperance. My purpose in giving the figures which have been quoted this afternoon was to point out that while I admit that there is a connection between facilities and the amount of drink consumption and drunkenness, it is not the only, or, in my opinion, the most important factor in the case. In my opinion, there are other factors of far greater influence and importance. The drink question is not a simple question. It is not a question that can be treated as an isolated question; it is part of the whole social problem, and if we approach the consideration of this question, or indeed the consideration of any with a reasonable hope of arriving at a proper solution we shall have to consider it as a whole. The two other factors for consideration to which I attach great importance, are the social and industrial condition of the people and the method of supply. By that I mean the financial interest which the brewers and publicans have in the supply of drink. I do not say that the brewers and publicans are worse than any other people. They go into the drink traffic as others go into other trades, in order to make a living; but, unfortunately, so far as the drink traffic is concerned, it is only by the encouragement of drunkenness that they can get rich. This Bill does not propose to touch those two important factors. The hon. Member who moved the rejection of the Bill sought to prove that there was no connection between facilities and drunkenness, and referred to Durham, Glamorganshire, and Yorkshire, and showed that these counties had the highest percentage of drunkenness. But it is not the question of facilities at all in those three counties. In those counties the factor is the social and industrial conditions, especially housing. There are instances where with a small number of licences convictions for drunkenness are high, because there are other important factors. Apart from these things I do not think it is possible to prove connection between facilities and drink consumption. When prohibition was established in the State of Maine, the number of arrests for drunkenness increased. But nobody would maintain that there was more drunkenness after the establishment of prohibition than before. This is not a matter to be decided by convictions for drunkenness, but by common sense. I think all are convinced that there is a change coming over the drinking habits of the people. I think that change is most manifest among what I might describe as the better part of our artisan population. I believe there is one class who drink much more than they formerly did: men of the commercial class who have the command of their own time. That is the class which is numerically increasing so much. They do not spend hours together in a public-house, but they visit public-houses very frequently with friends in the course of business, and in obedience to very foolish ideas they think that it is a social obligation to take drink. I think that drinking due to that cause could be very greatly diminished if the facilities were reduced. But that would not justify the conclusion that the reduction in the consumption would be in proportion to the reduction of facilities; still, if the number of houses were reduced, there would be less incentive to a publican to push the sale of drink for the sake of making a living. I believe the fact is that something like one-third of the licences change hands every year because of the difficulty of making a living. Only a few years ago the chief constable in my constituency reported to the licensing magistrates that, owing to the conditions under which the tied house tenants held their licences, it was practically impossible for them to make a living, and they were therefore compelled to resort to various methods of encouraging men to visit their houses. But a reduction of that class of public-houses would remove, I do not say entirely, but to some extent at any rate, the incentives which the publican is compelled at the present time to offer to men in order to push the sale of drink and make a living. These reasons—they might be added to—are quite sufficient in my opinion to justify our support of this Bill, which proposes to promote temperance reform by the reduction of licences. The other factor, a very important factor, namely the social and industrial condition of the people, cannot be embodied in a Licensing Bill nor in any one Bill of any kind. Speaking paradoxically, we shall have to be moving in a great many directions at the same time in order to attain the improved condition of the industrial classes. I now come to the second part of the Bill, namely, the time-limit. Supposing we had reason to believe that a reduction of the number of licences would be followed by a proportionate reduction of drinking, or supposing we reduced the number of licences by one-half, believing that the amount of drinking would be reduced by one-half, then, although I do not admit that the publican has a moral right to one penny of compensation, yet, if I believed that the reduction in the number of licences would be followed by a proportionate reduction in drinking, I would advocate that the State should pay a monetary compensation in order that that should be brought about at once, and I venture to think that it would be the best bargain that the State had ever made. But I do not expect, as I have said, that the reduction of facilities would be followed by a proportionate reduction in drinking, but it would be followed by some reduction, at any rate. Now, as to this time-limit, I do not admit the right of the drink traffic to a monetary compensation. Men on the Tory benches, or who ought to be on those benches, acknowledge the same thing. The Act of 1904 is an admission that there is no permanent interest in a licence. A quotation was given in the course of the debate this afternoon in which the opinion was expressed that the time-limit would form a precedent for future legislation. May I be permitted to expound my opinion on that matter? I am no lawyer; thank heaven I have not come to that yet; but I know sufficient of the practice and theory of English law to be aware that it recognises no such thing as a permanent right, either in a licence or in any other form of property. The only thing the law acknowledges is the right of the individual to protection in the enjoyment of his property, so long as that enjoyment is not against the public welfare. But as soon as any kind of injury is inflicted on the public welfare then the public welfare must be supreme. That has been admitted over and over again. The Lands Clauses Act is an interference with the right of private contract with such compensation as the community shall decide to be fair and equitable; and, mark you, that compensation varies according to what has been regarded as the permanent nature of the property to be appropriated; it varies in different degrees. It has already been admitted that there is no permanent right to any licence, and therefore the amount of compensation cannot be the same as it would be in the case of land, or railways, or mines, where undoubtedly the State has admitted the right of the individual to enjoy the property so long as that right to enjoy the property does not conflict with the public welfare. I do not see that those who are objecting to the time-limit have any right to complain that this thing has been suddenly sprung upon them without any warning. It is nearly forty years since a responsible Government proposed it. It is something like thirteen years since another Government introduced a local veto Bill which, if it had been carried, would have given the people the right to close public-houses without compensation. It is only ten years since hon. Members, who were then associated with the Conservative Party, introduced into this House, at the instigation of the Church of England Temperance Society, a Bill for a time-limit. Ten years ago a Royal Commission reported in favour of a time-limit, or, at any rate, certain members of it did so. Then, again, so far as I am aware, there is only one country, or only one State in the world, where monetary compensation has been recognised, when the State has decided to assume control of the licences or to abolish the licences altogether—that is the State of Victoria. I submit, therefore, that the trade has had ample warning, and they ought to have been preparing for what they knew must come sooner or later, because every sensible man was aware that the present condition of things was not permanent. Then as to the period proposed by this Bill for the trade to recoup itself. The estimate of what is called the monopoly value of the licences is given as £100,000,000. Five per cent. over fourteen years would give something like a redemption of that sum, and yet we are told that the trade is incapable of increasing its profits by 5 per cent. Suppose the Chancellor of the Exchequer was in need of revenue, and he proposed to increase the beer tax by £5,000,000. The Conservative Government increased the taxation on beer by £3,000,000, and the trade adapted itself to that increased revenue. By that Party the taxation on beer has been increased 20 per cent. within the last fifteen years, and the trade, I repeat, has adapted itself. In order to recoup themselves under the terms and conditions of the Bill, they would require to find £5,000,000 or at the very most £6,000,000 a year, and they certainly are lamentably lacking in business capacity if they are not able to do that. Of course, we know who will have to pay it. The customers will have to pay it. The customer is paying it now. So much for the objections to the time-limit. There are just one or two other matters upon which I want to touch. One is the application of the principle of local veto in regard to the number of licences. I believe in local veto as a principle, but ever since I began to make inquiries upon this matter I have doubted whether in operation it will do very much to reduce the amount of drunkenness. But there is a great difference between local veto as applied to existing licences, and local veto in regard to the issue of new licences. In Queensland they have local option which enables a vote of the locality to close existing public-houses. A clause in the same Act enables a majority of the electors to veto the issue of proposed new licences. In not a single case has the veto been exercised in regard to existing licences, but nearly 80 per cent. of the proposed new licences have been vetoed. The reason for the difference is, of course, obvious. In the one case an interest has been created. The people who vote know the man. He is probably a neighbour or a friend, and sympathy enters into the consideration of the question, but in regard to new licences no interest whatever has been created. I believe, under the operation of that clause in the Bill, when it becomes an Act, that in the overwhelming majority of cases the people will veto the issue of new licences. I prefer that the people should have this decision rather than the bench of licensing magistrates. The people know the needs of the locality better than the bench of magistrates. There is no difference in principle between the two things, but there is a little difference in form. The magistrates, at any rate, are supposed to be acting on behalf of the people, and local veto is simply allowing the people to act for themselves and not merely through their proxies the licensing bench of magistrates. There is another reason why I approve of the proposed adoption of local veto, even in this limited form. I think it is better that a new thing should begin in a small way rather than in a more extended form. Fourteen years will accustom the people to voting on these questions, and at the end of that time, therefore, I think an educated public opinion will be far better able to deal justly with the question of continuing or vetoing licences than if the full power of local veto were conferred at the present time. I believe that during the period of the time-limit public opinion with regard to the temperance question will have ripened very much, and that at the end of fourteen years public opinion will be prepared to deal with the third factor in the question of which I have spoken, namely, the method of supply; and I believe the people will take the control of the drink traffic in the fullest and most complete sense of the word. The elimination of all financial interest is at any rate an option I should like to see given to the people at the expiration of the time-limit. Just one word upon another aspect of the question, and I speak now for myself only, and that is the question of clubs. I have already referred to the provision which enables the people to veto the issue of new licences. What is the use of vetoing the issue of new licences if the minority who want the licences are going to have liberty to form a club in which, practically without regulation and without control, they can drink every hour of the day and night? I feel most keenly upon this question, because I believe temperance reform is absolutely impossible unless you are prepared to deal drastically with this question of clubs. There has been in the past few years an increase in the number of clubs. It has not been very rapid, I admit, because there has not been the encouragement to form clubs, but with a reduction in the number of public-houses, with the exercise of the power of local veto over the issue of new licences, it is perfectly certain that there will be a much more rapid increase in the number of clubs than has taken place during the last few years. Therefore, if the power to form these clubs be left even as it is proposed in this Bill it will defeat the end of all other parts of the Bill which have aimed at temperance reform. Many of the clubs which have been formed in the last few years are nothing more than public-houses owned by brewers, as much tied houses as any tied public-house. I deplore the want of courage on the part of certain politicians in grappling with this question. I do not fear the club vote. I do not believe the club vote is so strong numerically as some seem to think. I feel so strongly the need for dealing drastically with this question that I am prepared to defy the club vote. Without the treatment of this question drastically you might as well give up all hope of temperance reform. There is just another matter in connection with the Bill to which I have heard no reference made so far, and that is the fact that it does not deal with grocers' licences. Had it proposed to deal with grocers' licences I believe that would have been the most popular clause in the Bill. No one supports grocers' licences except grocers who have licences, and I think it is universally admitted that they are as potent a cause of intemperance, especially among women, as the ordinary public-house. The last speaker made a suggestion that the time-limit should be extended. I hope the Government will do no such thing. From what I know of the feeling in the country I am convinced that if the Government extend the time-limit they will take the heart out of those who are agitating and supporting this Bill in the country. Fourteen years is far longer than the trade had any right to expect. It is far too generous. We want something doing in our lifetime. We do not want to wait twenty-one years. Very brave words have been uttered from that bench and even braver words have been uttered in the country by responsible Ministers. They have declared that they mean to stand by the main provisions of this Bill. I hope they will. They have upon their side in supporting this Bill such a combination as I think has never supported a measure before. They have all the churches and religious organisations of the country, they have the organised labour movement solid in their support, and the enthusiastic support of those of us who sit upon these benches. Therefore I hope they will not take their hand away from the plough, that they will persevere and pass this measure into law, and I am perfectly certain that by so doing they will have made a beginning which eventually will bring untold happiness, comfort and health to the people of this country.

*Mr. ELLIS GRIFFITH (Anglesey): We all recognise the authority with which the hon. Member speaks and the sincerity of purpose that inspires all his speeches, and I am sure all Liberals, as far as I know on this side, are especially glad to know that we have organised labour also upon our side. It has been gratifying, at any rate, to know in the course of the debate that everyone who has spoken, whether on this side or that, is a very strong supporter of the temperance movement, especially hon. Members on the other side. Their voices grow quite pathetic when they declare their adhesion to the great temperance cause. Their only regret is that they could not support this particular Bill because it did not attain the purpose so dear to their hearts. The remedy of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Honiton was quite simple. When he found a man who got drunk he would fine him the first time at a pretty big figure, at a still bigger figure on the second occasion, and send him to prison on the third—a very drastic and heroic remedy for drunkenness. As far as the Royal Commission is concerned, the unanimous Report has been referred to more than once in the course of the debate. There were direct representatives of the trade on that Commission, and they came unanimously to the conclusion that there was a gigantic evil to be remedied, and that no sacrifice was too great in procuring the diminution of what they unanimously called a national degradation. I have listened during the debate to discover what is the remedy and who is to make the sacrifice. So far as I can understand, everyone recommends everyone else to make the sacrifice and find the remedy. I take it that this Licensing Bill, at any rate, is the answer of the Liberal Party to the remedy and to the sacrifice asked of the country. With regard to this, I think the leading point of difference between the two sides on this occasion has been that the Conservative Members say: "You really cannot do much by Act of Parliament. What you want to do is to enlighten public opinion." It is said you cannot make a man sober by Act of Parliament. In a certain sense that is true. You cannot make him industrious, educated, and learned. But that does not prevent us from passing Acts of Parliament on these questions. If I were asked the question I should think an Act of Parliament has more power over the sobriety of the people than almost any other part of public life. The existence of licences and the restrictions with which the trade is surrounded is the very admission of the right of Parliament to regulate the trade, and why should we not say that Parliament will diminish the number of licences—that is, the temptation to drinking? In the second place, as far as local option is concerned, it will not make a man sober, but it will give him the opportunity to make himself sober, which is a much more important thing. Is there or is there not any relationship between the number of licences and the temptation to drinking and to drunkenness? There are two answers to that question. First of all, the experiment of free trade in drink, that is, an unlimited number of licences, has been tried. If the number of licences has nothing to do with drinking, how comes it that when the free trade experiment was made drunkenness was more rife than it had ever been before, and when the converse of that movement took place in Liverpool, the city again grew more sober? Is not that really almost a conclusive answer? It proves that the increased number of licences increased the facilities for drinking, and led to drunkenness. In the Act of 1904, the whole principle underlying the measure was that if you decrease the number of licences you have a great temperance measure. It seems to me that there is no answer to those two suggestions of mine. The Liverpool free trade experiment and the Act of 1904 prove conclusively that there is a relationship between the number of licences and the facilities for drink. In regard to the second principle in the Bill—the time-limit—that is a point on which there is considerable difference of opinion. I do not propose to go as far as my hon. friend's philosophical disquisition on this point. You must look, when you have regard to the time-limit, at what you are time limiting. Something is said about licences and freeholds. The Leader of the Opposition, whose absence we all regret, has said more than once that he never pretended for a moment that there was a freehold in licences in this country. That being so, we must look at the property that we are time limiting. As far back as eighty years ago an Act of Parliament was passed which said that these licences should be for one year only. At the end of the year it was not a continuation of the old licence, but the granting of a new licence for the subsequent year. That went on until 1882, when a case was tried in the High Court which decided the principle that we say has always been the law of England as to the discretion of the magistrates. In 1883, Thomas Nash, the legal adviser to the Licensed Victuallers' Association, wrote to the papers saying that this was no new thing to him, but a secret of the trade for many years past, and it had been divulged, perhaps unnecessarily, by this case, and that they all knew that subject to the appeal to quarter sessions the justices had unlimited discretion over the licences. In 1891, it was put beyond controversy in the Sharpe and Wakefield case. The trade knew all about the matter, and so it remained until the Act of 1904. What we have to consider is what difference the Act of 1904 made. What the Act of 1904 does is to provide that, when a licence is taken away simply on the ground that it is not required, compensation shall be paid by the remaining members of the trade. The Conservative Government of that time did not venture to say that there was a freehold in licences. It was never suggested that they were taking something which the licensee possessed, but that the surviving licensees should compensate the man whose licence was taken away. Under these circumstances I venture to suggest that really the 1904 Act was simply the corollary of what took place under the boom of 1896. During those years the brewers tied the houses, and in 1904 the Conservative Government tied the magistrates. The question of the principle is not in doubt, and it is simply a question of how long. Although not much is heard about it in this House, the licence is talked of in the country as if it were a freehold. In the case of a freehold a man would be entitled to twenty, twenty-five, or thirty years' purchase as compensation. But licences are not freeholds, and the time-limit of fourteen years is simply a concession made for the expectancy which the holders have had. These so-called freeholds are not insured; nobody ever heard of a man insuring his freehold. [OPPOSITION cries of "Yes."] What, insuring your freehold title? [An HON. MEMBER: Yes, against fire.] That, of course, is a very wise precaution to take.

MR. WILLIAM RUTHERFORD (Liverpool, West Derby): You can insure against robbery.

*MR. ELLIS GRIFFITH: But you do not insure your freehold. No man can run away with an acre of land and you would not think of insuring your freehold.

MR. WILLIAM RUTHERFORD: We shall have to do so now.

*MR. ELLIS GRIFFITH: I am surprised to hear that from the hon. and learned Member who is the great Socialist Member for Liverpool. I am astonished at his interruption. My submission is that nobody insures a freehold. You may insure against fire, spoliation, or even an earthquake, but you never insure your freehold. When these licences are sold, what is the principle which a valuer applies to them? He goes down to the house, and having found out how many barrels of beer and gallons of spirits are sold in the house in the year, puts 10s. profit per barrel on the beer and 5s. profit per gallon on the spirits, and calculates the annual profit in this way. Then he asks how many years purchase he should allow, and if he is a wise valuer he considers the structure of the house, the number of public-houses in the neighbourhood, and whether the local magistrates are energetic or supine. If the result is unfavourable in all these respects, he will allow perhaps five years purchase. If the result is favourable, he will go as high as eleven or twelve years purchase. A man who received nine or ten years purchase on his annual profit may in general be considered to have been handsomely dealt with; but the period proposed in this Bill is fourteen years. Therefore, the Bill is perfectly just from that point of view. It is said that we have not got all the religious bodies on our side. I know there are some bishops who are not with us, but I think there are at least six bishops who support us very strongly. No Welsh bishop opposes this Bill, or at any rate the majority of them have refused to join the movement against this Bill. I agree with the view that it is not advisable to legislate too much in front of public opinion. As a Welsh Member I am glad special provision has been made for Wales, because Wales is far in advance of England on this question of temperance. I am glad the Government has recognised that fact and given the people of Wales an opportunity of saying how many licences there shall be in a licensing district. I recognise that the reduction will be subject to compensation, but I nevertheless think that considerable good will accrue from this provision. But as to that part of the Bill dealing with clubs, it is absolutely no good whatever taking away a licence if a club is to be substituted. My hon. friends on the Government Bench must take their courage in both hands and deal with clubs. It is no good passing a Licensing Bill upon these lines. We ought to make a club pay licence duties. I do not stand up for the publican especially, but it does seem hard on the publican, who has to pay a licence, that he should have a club next door paying neither licence nor compensation. I know a club the receipts of which are £90 a week, and the publican close by takes £50 a week, and while the publican has to pay £40 for his licence and £60 compensation levy, or £100 a year, the club simply pays a registration fee of 5s. a year. That is ridiculous. Financial arguments have been very much gone into in the debate, but the financial considerations should not have too much weight, because higher considerations are involved in this case. I agree that it would be well worth while making a great sacrifice to get a proper control over the drink traffic. [OPPOSITION cries of "Hear, hear."] I am still of that opinion although my hon. friends opposite agree with me. In my view this is a matter which must be fought out. Everyone knows that the liquor trade lies at the root of most of the poverty, crime, and misery in the country, and until this problem is dealt with drastically we shall never have that happy and contented England which we all desire.

MR. WILLIAM RUTHERFORD: I desire to offer a few words in opposition to this Bill on the ground that it is a destructive and restrictive measure which is only masquerading as a temperance measure. It has been said that we on the Opposition side of the House are devoting ourselves to the interests of the brewers and publicans. I will leave others to speak for the brewers and publicans; I wish to give the view of the man in the street—the man who is a moderate consumer of alcoholic drinks, who does not get drunk—in short, the representative person in England and Wales, who is not a teetotaller and not a drunkard. I think that in considering this question it is certainly desirable to look at the question from the point of view of the consumer. I admit with the last speaker, and with the most fervent of the teetotaller orators we have heard on the other side, all the evils of drunkenness. In 1907 we had 197,000 convictions for drunkenness in England and Wales, and every man in this House knows of cases in his own experience where homes are blighted, where prospects fail, and where homes are broken up by this terrible evil. We on this side claim to be as anxious to put down drunkenness as any of those hon. Members who have addressed the House in support of the Bill, and we are prepared to make allowances for some of our friends, because those who are total abstainers themselves honestly think that the same course of conduct would be the best thing for everybody else. Those men are certainly entitled to put their views before the community in the face of the terrible evils which undoubtedly exist, but their views should not be allowed on an occasion like this to obscure our views, or to cause us to take any mistaken view of the general position. My proposition is that it is not the use of alcoholic liquors that ought to be interfered with; it is the abuse, and mere repression is no remedy. There are countries, and there are religions, where the use of alcoholic liquors is entirely prohibited, but it is a matter of common knowledge that a certain proportion of the people of every country are devoid of self-control, and in those countries evils of a kind to which, in comparison, drunkenness is a very feeble one, undoubtedly abound. Where potable alcohol in our own country and in America cannot be obtained the people take to such liquors as methylated spirits, and there are things worse than that, such as the drug habit. I venture to lay down two principles: firstly, that all excessive drinking is admittedly a great evil, and that we should take all reasonable means to put an end to it, provided that in doing so we avoid the risk of incurring even greater evils; and, secondly, that the moderate consumption of alcohol is not in itself wrong or harmful. Whilst, therefore, we should not be concerned to interfere with the moderate and legitimate refreshments of the people, we ought to be directly concerned—and we ought to be prepared to do everything that in us lies to diminish it—with this great national vice. How are we to carry this into effect? Well, the off-hand answer to this question is that we should begin by closing up one-third of the public-houses. That is the answer made by this Bill, and I venture to say that the off-hand answer made in this way is made by people who have not studied the question of intemperance, or by people who have no practical experience of public-houses themselves. Those people who have no practical experience of public-houses may be divided into two classes. There are the teetotallers themselves, whose views are absolutely prejudiced on the question, and we who claim to be reasonable men should not allow ourselves to be misled either by teetotal views on the one hand, or by the arguments of merely interested people on the other. We should try to look at the thing fairly and squarely. The other class includes the whole of the better classes in this country. The bishops, to whom my hon. and learned friend referred just now, know nothing at all in practice of the inside of public-houses. They have got their private cellars, and they have got their clubs, the Athenæum and so on, where they may meet their special friends and talk over matters with them. When they travel they go to first class-hotels. The common inn or public-house knows not the bishops or the gentlemen of the superior class, and it is equally true that they are not qualified by personal experience, and much less by necessity, to say anything really important on the subject of licensed houses. Without any disrespect to the Members of this House who are present to-night, may I say that the same thing applies to them ? Members of Parliament in dealing with the question of licensed houses are merely legislating for classes of the community of whose habits and necessities, by experience at all events, they know little or nothing. They know nothing about their homes, their work, their leisure, or their requirements. Members of Parliament can get at any hour of day or night—those who are not teetotallers—any alcoholic liquors they like within the precincts of this House, and therefore there is no necessity for their going into public-houses. I venture to point out that there is not merely one means of obtaining alcoholic refreshments. There are four means open. First of all you have the wine merchant to whom any member of the public can go, and by paying for them get wines and spirits to replenish their cellars. Then you have clubs, with respect to which a good deal had been said in the debate. In 1904 there were 6,371 clubs registered in England and Wales, in 1905 the number had increased to 6,589, in 1906 the number had increased to 6,721, and in 1709 the number was 6,907. There has been a steady and regular increase in the number of clubs. All classes of the community have got their clubs. You have the House of Commons, which has been called one of the best clubs in London. You have clubs for the bishops and others, the Athenæum, the Carlton, and the Reform, and then you have clubs in which a few poor working men meet in small inexpensive rooms in back streets. This Bill does not reduce the number of clubs automatically or in any other way ; it practically imposes no restrictions upon their formation, but it imposes five distinct annoyances. Here I am opposed to my hon. and learned friend who has just spoken, because I think that clubs are harshly and improperly dealt with. Everyone of the five restrictions imposed on clubs are practical hardships, not upon the best and wealthiest clubs, but upon poor men's clubs, and that is a kind of class distinction to which I very much object. What are these distinctions ? First of all, the Bill provides for the compulsory annual renewal of club registration. That is a trifle in the case of the Athenaeum or the Reform ; the club would send down the secretary to carry out the formality. But it is a serious thing to a club consisting of a few poor men, because it involves the expense of getting the renewal. Then there is the transfer to the licensing justices of jurisdiction over clubs which is an intolerable thing to inflict upon a voluntary assembly of Englishmen. They do not want their clubs to be put in the category of licensed houses. They prefer the court of summary jurisdiction which has always had charge of these affairs in the past. Then there is the right of police entry. That, as you know, would be a mere farce with regard to a club like the Reform or the Devonshire, but it is a very serious thing indeed in the case of a club of a few working men. [AN HON. MEMBER: Why ?] Because a police inspector would not dare to go into the Reform or the Athenæum and act as he would do in a poor man's club. In a poor man's club he would say to a member "You walk this chalk line." The police inspector would behave himself in the same way as when he goes into a public-house. The indignities to which the poor man's club would be subjected by the police inspector would never be dreamt of in the case of the wealthy man's club in Pall Mall. Then there is the question of the £20 fine. If Lord So-and-So, or the Duke of Something, had been keeping a birthday at his club and, if coming out apparently the worse of liquor, he should be "spotted" by an extra intelligent policeman, a £20 fine might be imposed. That would be nothing to the wealthy club, but such a fine in the case of a working man's club would be ruination. And, further, the penalty of five years' forfeiture is the most outrageous suggestion in regard to clubs ever heard of in any Bill previously brought before this House. I have described two of the means which are open to people to get alcoholic liquors; the third is off-licensed houses, of which there are 25,143 in England and Wales. There is a wide difference of opinion as to whether anything should be done with regard to off-licences; but it is practically admitted by the Government that nothing can or ought to be done in the way of reducing them, because the Bill does not attempt to do it. The fourth means of obtaining intoxicating liquor is the public-houses. In 1907 there were 97,554 public-houses in England and Wales—a great reduction since 1904. Every licensee of a public-house is bound to be a man of good character, or he cannot get a licence; the premises must be suitable or the licence will not be granted; there is police supervision of the premises, and practical publicity while the liquor is being consumed. All these things render the licensed public-house the safest place for the sale and consumption of alcoholic liquors. But what does this Bill propose to do? It only attacks the public-house, as has been practically pointed out by the Prime Minister and all his supporters, and fails in dealing with the other sources of supply. The Bill proposes to leave three means of supply entirely unreduced—the wine and spirit merchant, the club, and the grocers' licence. The Bill proposes to close only one-third of the existing licensed houses, and there is no doubt that that will not accomplish any practical result in the way of greater sobriety. Let us take an illustration. Supposing in a given hamlet you have three public-houses, a grocer's licence, and a club, and that you have in that hamlet one or two habitual drunkards, and twenty or thirty teetotallers, and 5,000 people who are moderate consumers of alcoholic liquor. [MINISTERIAL cries of "Oh, oh!"]

*MR. LEIF JONES: Do you only give us twenty teetotallers out of a population of 5,000?

MR. WILLIAM RUTHERFORD: Yes, that is all. I do not say how many professing teetotallers there are, but I give what I really believe to be the actual true figures of those who carry out the teetotal principle. Supposing you close one-third of the licensed houses, or one, two are left, and you have still a club and also a grocer's licence. I put it to the House, will the closing of one licensed house out of three reform these one or two drunkards? I submit that the idea is absurd. If drink is to be got from any source whatever these habitual drunkards will, in spite of the closing of a licensed house, get it; and the effect of closing the house will be that a large number of law-abiding, respectable people who do not get drunk, but indulge in a moderate amount of alcoholic liquor, will be greatly inconvenienced. In fact, the closing of one licensed house out of three, and leaving two other modes of acquiring liquor entirely untouched, will do nothing whatever for sobriety. This is not merely a matter of argument, but is proved by the facts published in the Blue-books, which establish beyond all possible doubt that the mere number of public-houses per 10,000 of the population has nothing whatever to do with and no relation to the number of convictions for drunkenness. For instance, take the County of Northumberland. I find from the returns that there are in that county 20·25 licensed houses per 10,000 inhabitants, and that the convictions for drunkenness are no less than 146 per 10,000 of the inhabitants; whereas, in Oxfordshire we have three times the number of public-houses per 10,000 inhabitants and 11·29 convictions for drunkenness, or less than one-twelth of the convictions for drunkenness in Northumberland. I have taken the trouble to extract from the Blue-books four sets of counties and four sets of county boroughs with the corresponding figures, which I will offer to the House, as I venture to think that the subject is one of very great importance. In Oxfordshire we have 64·7 public-houses per 10,000 inhabitants and the convictions for drunkenness are 11·29. In Cambridgeshire we have 74 public-houses per 10,000 inhabitants and the convictions for drunkenness are 12 per 10,000 inhabitants. In Norfolk we have 56 public-houses per 10,000 inhabitants, and the convictions for drunkenness are 17. In Buckinghamshire we have 62 public-houses per 10,000 inhabitants, and the convictions for drunkenness are 19. Contrast these with the following counties. In

Carnarvonshire we have 28 public-houses per 10,000 inhabitants, and the convictions for drunkenness are 55. In Lancashire, my own county, we have 23 public-houses per 10,000 inhabitants, and I am sorry to say that the convictions for drunkenness are 59. In Durham, we have 23 public-houses per 10,000 habitants, and the convictions for drunkenness are 101. In Northumberland, there are 21 public-houses per 10,000 inhabitants, and the convictions for drunkenness, are 146. It might almost appear from these figures as if it were true that the more public-houses there are in any district the less the drunkenness, and that the less the public-houses the more the drunkenness. However, I do not put it so high as that. In the county boroughs the figures are just as bad if you compare them in the same way. I only give the names of the places, and hon. Members can refer to the Blue-books for themselves. The places where there are the fewest public-houses and the most drunkenness are West Ham, Bootle, Middlesbrough, and Birkenhead; and the places where there are most public-houses and the least drunkenness are Gloucester, Norwich, Canterbury, and Bath. This also applies to towns where there are technical manufactures like Wolverhampton, where there are 37·54 public-houses per 10,000 inhabitants, and only 14·7 convictions for drunkenness. I put this question: why should Birkenhead, with only one-half of the licensed houses per 10,000 of the population as compared with Wolverhampton, be fifteen times as drunken? It is almost as curious a fact as that a good many teetotallers have red noses. It is one of those singular facts which nobody can explain. I do not assert for these figures that it is proved that the more public-houses the less drunkeness, or *vice-versa*, but what I do say is that it is perfectly clear there is no correlation between the number of public-houses and the putting down of drunkenness. During this debate, some temperance reformers have demanded the suppression of off-licences, and some have demanded the suppression of clubs. But my point is that so long as the wealthy man can go to the wine merchant and buy his spirits and wine, so long must you allow the poor man to go to the grocer to buy his bottle; and so long as you allow men of means to form a club in Pall Mall or Piccadilly you cannot prevent an equal number of poor men from forming a club and registering it equally free from restrictions. The time has gone by when the Government will be permitted under any guise to make any distinction between one section of the community and another. In my opinion you cannot and you ought not to stop the moderate consumption of alcoholic liquors, and public-houses are the safest places where these liquors ought to be consumed. The publicans must be of good character; the premises must be of approved construction and arrangement; you have publicity, and therefore these are the safest places where a glass of beer can be consumed. That is no mere opinion; it is proved by the figures of last year, where you have 197,000 convictions for drunkenness, and only 744 publicans convicted of selling alcoholic liquor to drunken people. That proves conclusively that 96 out of 197 times a drunkard is convicted of drunkenness before the magistrates he did not partake of that drink in a public-house. ["Oh."] Well, those are the facts, and that is my inference from them. Hon. Members can form their opinions, and draw their inferences. I do not pretend to give their opinions. This Bill proceeds upon the basis that the licensed house itself is the evil to be suppressed, but that I venture to think is a complete mistake. It is not the house, but it is the conduct of the man who overslips the limits of sobriety, either in the licensed house, or by buying a bottle of drink or getting it in a club, which has to be dealt with. This Bill makes as its boast that it is to put down the brewer and the publican, whereas the real temperance measure should take as its basis the putting down of insobriety. Houses of public refreshment and entertainment are a public necessity, and instead of suppression their conditions should be reformed and improved. There are two classes you have to deal with, not merely one. There are unfortunately a few thousands of drunken people in England and Wales, but there are millions for whom the public-house is an essential convenience, and you ought to help them to make a right use of it. There is another point, that catering for the public properly demands an outlay of very considerable capital, and if you strike a blow at that capital you will certainly interfere with the enjoyment of the public, and the public who will be the sufferers. This Bill, if really a temperance measure, should contain some provisions such as the following:—It ought to deal first with the drunkard, with the man who has been three or four times convicted in one year. There are several things that might be done to him. He might be disfranchised; he might be deprived of the charge of any young children; he should be prevented from teaching in school; he should not be allowed to be a member of any incorporated profession or any trade union; and if these penalties were inoperative he should be locked up. Then, secondly, as to the drink. There is nothing in this Bill which goes to help the man who wants a glass of drink to get a better glass of drink than he has to-day. How about adulteration and false description of goods? I know of cases where that kind of thing is going on every day. I say that something should be done to put down, in a far more drastic manner than has ever been attempted, adulteration and false description. Thirdly, there is the conduct of the business. If this were a real temperance measure, why should there not be a clause making every licensee provide on demand such things as tea, coffee, cocoa, and soup of a fairly good quality, and simple eatables such as bread and butter, bread and cheese, and biscuits, which you cannot get in some licensed houses to-day? Things of this kind should be made compulsory. The principal reason why the majority of licensees do not do that to-day is that they are so magisterially restricted in their space that they have found it impossible. Lastly, there are the premises to be attended to. I have always been an advocate of the policy that the licensed house should be large, open and airy, well-ventilated, well-lit, warm in winter, clean, comfortable, respectable, not a place from which you should pass an Act of Parliament to keep children, but one where no child would be soiled by entering. That is the opposite side of it. Such a house ought to be provided with abundance of chairs and tables, and be carried on with as little as possible standing at the bar, where the idea is to drink up and order another or go out. But there again you cannot have that, because of the magisterially restricted space at present. Newspapers should be provided, and there should be an abundance of games instead of their being prohibited. Music also should be encouraged instead of being prohibited. I am giving a sketch of what would be an ideal public-house. The important point is that there are thousands and thousands of men who have nowhere else to go. Alternative places have not been provided by the United Kingdom Alliance or by any of the other temperance bodies, and men are obliged to go to a public-house in order to get that legitimate refreshment and entertainment to which after a hard day's work they are entitled. I say they would behave more respectably if they had respectable places to go to. The public-house should be made as respectable as possible and not as disreputable as it is at present. ["Oh!"] I know what I am speaking about, and a good many Members of this House do not. If the Legislature and the magistracy would only give permission, I believe the large majority of licensees would make these improvements themselves if they had an opportunity. I believe that this Bill is merely destructive. There is not a word in favour of sobriety in it, and from one end to the other there is not a word in suppression of drunkenness. It will do no good, and I oppose it because it is wanting in every possible element with regard either to the drink itself or to the premises, or to other conditions which would make for sobriety or temperance.

*MR. HERBERT SAMUEL: On this occasion, and it may be said also in the debate on the First Reading of this Bill, no Member of this House who has spoken, no matter how bitterly opposed to the Bill he may be, has endeavoured to minimise the evils with which it purports to deal, and the hon. Member who has just sat down has emphasised the fact that drunkenness and intemperance are among the greatest social evils of our country. The hon. and learned Member who moved the Amendment which we are now discussing emphasised it also, and the Leader of the Opposition, speaking on the First Reading of the Bill, said that of all the social evils that affect our country unquestionably the greatest is the evil of intemperance. We have had no attempt made to show that because the consumption of alcohol has been somewhat reduced in recent years, therefore intemperance has ceased to be a great, a gigantic, and an urgent social problem, and indeed the lesson to be drawn from the figures of the consumption of alcohol would be a false one if it led us to draw any such conclusion. For it must be remembered that the fall in the figures during the last six or seven years followed on a very rapid and very large increase, and at the present time if you take the average of recent years and compare the consumption of alcohol with that of twenty years ago you will find that our population consumes more now than it did at that period. Drunkenness undoubtedly is less frequent and less obvious than it has been, but we still have the colossal total of nearly 200,000 convictions every year, an immense number, and to that must be added the large number of cases that go undetected and uncharged. It is one of the gravest aspects of the matter, and it is a fact which is notorious to all who study social conditions, that drinking among women in public-houses has been very rapidly on the increase. The effect of that upon the state of the country cannot fail to be injurious. The hon. and learned Member who moved the Amendment which we are now considering and who spoke with the forceful moderation which the House always expects from him, did not devote himself to any effort to prove that temperance reform was unnecessary. What he said was that this Bill would not effect it. This Bill is built upon the principle that the excessive number of facilities for securing alcoholic liquor is most fatal to the cause of temperance, and other things being equal we assert that the greater the facilities for the distribution of liquor the larger will be the consumption. Every public-house is in the nature of an advertisement of the pleasures of drinking. It is one of the most interesting discoveries of modern commerce that people of weak will can be hypnotised by advertisement into buying things which they do not need. One public-house in a street has the effect of one advertisement, ten public-houses have the effect of ten advertisements, and the effect is multiplied more than ten-fold. In addition every public-house is an active agency for the sale of drink, each one has its circle of habitués and each publican has his own *clientèle*. If you have 90,000 public-houses and 90,000 publicans then you have 90,000 agents pushing the sale of drink, and if you reduce that number by one-third *pro tanto* you reduce the inducements to drink. For all these reasons *prima facie* one would naturally suppose that the more public-houses there are the more drunkenness there would be, and other things being equal we believe that a ward in a town with fifty public-houses would be less temperate than a ward with five or ten. It is quite true that if you pay no regard to the character of the population, if you fail to take into account the severity or the laxity of police administration, you may pick out particular counties or particular towns and say that there is no correspondence between the number of licences and the number of convictions for drunkenness; but what a futile thing it is to take a county such as Oxfordshire, which is an agricultural county of small villages, and compare it with Northumberland, which is full of crowded mining towns, with a comparatively small number of houses where spirituous liquors are to be bought and sold. And we at the Home Office are well aware that, with regard to the number of convictions, we cannot fail to take into account the obvious fact that a new and energetic Chief Constable can, almost by a stroke of the pen, by altering the methods of administration, increase the number of convictions for drunkenness by ten or twenty per cent. At the same time, where we have a homogeneous group of towns or counties, with a fairly uniform administration, we often find a remarkable correspondence between the figures for licences

Mr. Herbert Samuel.

and the figures for drunkenness. Take a group of South of England ports, Plymouth, Devonport, Portsmouth and Southampton. Those towns are fairly comparable with one another. Plymouth has 23 licences for 10,000 population, and there are 18 convictions for drunkenness; Devonport has 25 licences and 26 convictions; Portsmouth, 37 licences and 44 convictions; Southampton, 37 licences and also 44 convictions. Let us take another group of ports on the North-East coast with a different class of population and a much higher ratio of drunkenness: West Hartlepool, South Shields, and Tynemouth. West Hartlepool had 11 licences and 75 convictions; South Shields, 16 licences, 109 convictions; Tynemouth, 31 licences and 314 convictions. Let us take Cornwall and Devonshire. Devonshire with 50 per cent. more licences to the population has also almost exactly 50 per cent. more cases of drunkenness to the population than Cornwall. There are, of course, many exceptions to these figures, and I attach very little importance to them and merely quote them as contrary illustrations to those already given; but I adhere to this, that if you eliminate the disturbing factors of police administration and differences in character of the population, you do find that the larger the facilities for obtaining liquor the larger the intemperance is. But I ask the House to view the question on a larger scale than this. If you view it on a historic scale, and take the experience of the nation as a whole over long periods of time, you arrive at the certain and indisputable conclusion that where the restrictions on the sale of liquor have been relaxed, drunkenness has increased. Towards the end of the seventeenth century Parliament threw open the trade of distilling and all restrictions were removed. Everybody was free to distil spirits and what was the consequence? The consequence was that the consumption of spirits, following on that change in the law, increased tenfold in fifty years, and history records that a large part of the nation sank into an orgie of degradation. The hon. Member who moved the Amendment said that consumption depended upon demand, and not upon supply. The experience of this country has proved the contrary. It has proved that when the restrictions on supply were relaxed, at once the demand leaped up to meet the supply, and you had a consumption of liquor which did not exist before the alteration of the law. Then from time to time there were some more or less futile attempts to reduce the facilities for the sale of liquor; but in 1830 Parliament once more threw open the trade, this time the trade in beer, and within a few years beer licences were obtained literally by tens of thousands, and the results were disastrous. A great flood of intemperance spread over the country, from which we are only now painfully and slowly emerging. Take, again, the experience of those parts of the United Kingdom in which there is general Sunday closing: Scotland, Wales and Ireland, except in the four great towns. Take the Reports of those inquiries by Commission or Committee which have reported to the Sovereign or the House. They have in every case reported that the result of Sunday closing in Scotland, Wales, and Ireland have been in the direction of producing greater sobriety amongst the people. They have all recommended the maintenance, and when necessary the strengthening of the Sunday closing laws. We shall watch with interest the course of this debate in order to see whether a single member for Scotland, Ireland, or Wales will get up and say whether the Sunday closing law, in the interests of temperance, should be repealed. The Minority Report of the Royal Commission on the Liquor Licensing Laws of 1899 urged emphatically the necessity of a large and drastic reduction in the number of licences for the sake of temperance; and the majority, which contained eight representatives appointed to safeguard the interests of the liquor trade, were, with two dissentients, emphatically of the same opinion. The hon. and learned Member who made so able a speech this afternoon was not quite fair to the House when he quoted one sentence only from that Report, to the effect that there is apparently no relation between the number of licences and the amount of drunkenness. If he had continued the quotation he would have read that "It is generally admitted that the number of licences in a great many parts of England and Wales is in excess of the requirements . . . . Where an excessive and unnecessary number of licences are crowded together in a limited area, more drinking probably does prevail, and a large reduction is much to be desired." The majority on the Royal Commission recommended first, that the law should be simplified and secondly "that the number of licensed houses should be largely reduced." Why, if not in the interests of temperance? At that time there were 102,000 licensed houses, now there are 95,000. I think no one will hold that that is a reduction which fulfils the demand that there should be a large reduction. At the present time I am endeavouring to establish this proposition, and this only, that the reduction of a percentage of the houses is in itself a measure of temperance reform. I may quote in support of my argument the right hon. Gentlemen on the Front Bench opposite. The late Home Secretary, who had charge of the Bill of 1904, declared emphatically that what he and his colleagues desired to see as a result of that Bill was a general reduction in the number of licences. The Leader of the Opposition, then Prime Minister, on the Third Reading of the 1904 Bill said—

> "I am perfectly convinced that when the Bill is working, and when it is seen that by this Bill, and by this Bill alone, you can without gross injustice and discontent really diminish the number of licences in this country, all Parties, forgetting the differences which have unhappily divided us during the past three months, will admit that this is the greatest contribution ever made to the cause of temperance reform."

What I wish to emphasise in this is that the right hon. Gentleman declared loudly and emphatically that his Bill was a great measure of temperance reform because it reduced the number of public-houses. It is trifling with the subject and with the House for hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite, who said in 1904 that their Bill was a great temperance measure because it reduced the number of public-houses, to say now that the Government Bill is not a temperance measure because to reduce their number is useless. Now if we take into account the experience of England in earlier days, and the experience of Scotland, Ireland, and Wales in the matter of Sunday closing, if we consider the emphatic recommendations of both the majority and the minority of the Royal Commission, and particularly the declarations of the Leader of the Opposition and his colleagues, the proposition is absolutely established that to reduce the opportunities for selling liquor is to promote temperance reform.

But we are told that the Act of 1904 does good service in accomplishing the reduction of licensed houses. We are further told that our Bill will not have any effect because as fast as we reduce licensed houses clubs will arise to take the place of those houses. We find the Act of 1904 wholly inadequate for its purpose. It reduces only one house a year in each district—a most trifling reduction. My right hon. friend the Home Secretary has been accused of hampering the administration of the Act of 1904, because he has prevented money being borrowed on the security of the compensation fund for the purpose of reducing the number of public-houses. Of course, my right hon. friend has refused to allow money to be borrowed to compensate houses on a lavish scale when he knew the Government was introdcing a Bill to alter the basis of compensation. And it is obviously a fallacy to assert that to prevent borrowing is to prevent the Act being put into full operation. All that the Government has done is to prevent the forestalling of the future compensation fund. The Act of 1904, in our view, has two grave and radical defects of principle. The first is that each district is made dependent upon its own fund to reduce redundant licences, and a redundant licence, therefore, is a licence in a district which happens to have a surplus in its compensation fund. The second is that it makes the reduction of licences entirely dependent upon the voluntary action of the local justices. We know that the task of reduction is difficult and invidious, and I think the justices will be glad to have behind them the compulsory mandate of this Bill. They will be pleased when, in effecting the necessary reduction, they can place upon this House the blame for any inconvenience which may be caused to their neighbours. This Act, inadequate now, will become more and more inadequate as it becomes more expensive to purchase houses. The disease we have to eradicate needs far bolder surgery than the Act of 1904 can supply. I turn from that to the difficult and complex question of the right method of dealing with clubs which sell alcoholic liquor. We fully agree—the Prime Minister has stated it again and again with the utmost emphasis—that if clubs, existing for the sale of liquor, are to be allowed to grow up as fast as the public-houses are closed, then the purpose of this Bill will be defeated. That has been clearly and definitely stated; and we agree with the remarks on that point which fell from the hon. Member for Blackburn. Twenty-five men with a barrel of beer in a cottage do not constitute a club. There may be clubs which are nothing more than public-houses on the co-operative principle. Or men may set out with the best intentions to provide counter-attractions to public-houses, and find in the result that they have provided merely a substitute. On the other hand, however, no one proposes—I do not think any hon. Member opposite would propose—to prohibit all sale of intoxicating liquor in clubs, and I do not think anyone would propose to impose irritating and unnecessary restrictions. Neither hon. Gentlemen opposite nor we desire to destroy well-conducted, soberly-conducted working-men's clubs. Life is dull enough and drab enough for the majority of the population without depriving them of such facilities for healthy social entertainment and recreation as may exist. Under the Act of 1902 there are already very considerable powers for preventing the formation and for the suppression of drinking clubs. It is true that clubs are increasing in number. The increase is about one-seventh as fast as the decrease in the number of public-houses; but, on the average, never a week passes without a club being closed under the existing law for being conducted in a way which gives rise to drunkenness. As a matter of fact, as large a percentage of clubs have been closed under the Act of 1902 as of public-houses under the Act of 1904. This Bill adds greatly to the powers under the Act of 1902. The hon. Member who has just spoken is utterly in error when he says the Bill does nothing to increase the control over the drinking clubs. As the Act of 1902 stands, a club can only be struck off the register for certain defects or offences. One thing is for permitting frequent drunkenness to take place on the club premises. We go much further by adopting the words regulating clubs in Ireland and Scotland. We say that if a club is conducted mainly as a drinking club—a very wide form of words—it may be closed by the direction of the proper authority. Under the old Act there is no means for inspection except with magistrate's warrants; we provide for the entry of a policeman. [Opposition cries of dissent.] Do hon. Members opposite oppose that entry? ["Yes."] That is an interesting fact to obtain from them. We propose, at all events, a form of inspection which will be effective for its purpose and which will enable the authorities to know in what way a club is conducted. Thirdly, we prohibit the retail off-sale of intoxicating liquor to members of clubs, a sale long disapproved by the best leaders of the club movement. Further, we provide that no premises which have been used as a public-house can be used as a club within a period of five years from the time they cease to be a public-house. As the Prime Minister has said, other provisions may be proposed without infringing the principles we have laid down, which will further strengthen the law, and we shall watch with interest what Amendments for strengthening the clauses dealing with workmen's clubs will be placed upon the Paper by hon. Gentlemen opposite.

Earl WINTERTON (Sussex, Horsham): That is your way of getting out of the difficulty.

*MR. HERBERT SAMUEL: There are some provisions which we have reason to believe may cause some irritation and resentment and which, without in any degree weakening the powers under the Bill for suppressing the undesirable club, may, we think, perhaps be modified with the consent of the House. In the first place, the Bill provides that, pending an appeal against a conviction, the club's registration shall be cancelled, and the club may, therefore, legally be required to be closed. There is no such provision of the law with regard to public-houses. Where a public-house is discontinued by the licensing authority, that house, pending appeal to a higher authority, may be allowed to remain open. We think the same facility should be extended to clubs.. Secondly, it is provided that for an offence against the provisions of the Bill, a club may be struck off the register for a period of five years. A period so long as that would make it impossible to reorganise and restart the club on better lines. The penalty of five years was not intended to be a penalty for a first offence, but was intended as a maximum penalty. Maximum penalties are often on a scale which no one would dream of applying to first offences. I remember passing over a bridge not twenty miles from London and reading an inscription that any person damaging that bridge was guilty of a felony, and liable to penal servitude for life. No one imagines that a man who damaged the bridge would be sentenced to so cruel a term of imprisonment as that, and no one imagines that a club for a single and first offence would be struck off the roll for five years. The House may, however, think it advisable to limit the penalty to one year for a first offence. To allow off-sale in wholesale quantities while retail off-sale is prohibited is regarded as an invidious distinction, and we attach no importance to the provision, which, perhaps, may be altered. There are two other points. First, what should be the tribunal to adjudicate in cases of offences committed by clubs; and, secondly, what should be the character of inspection? The representatives of the clubs prefer that they should be subjected to the jurisdiction of the stipendiary magistrates in the towns rather than to that of the licensing justices; and they urge that, although the police inspection is limited to inspection by superior officers out of uniform, yet because it is police inspection it offends the susceptibilities of a large number of club members. It is difficult to find alternatives to these two provisions, but the Government will be very happy to consider any suggestions which may be made, subject to the conditions that the tribunal shall not be more lax and that the inspection shall not be less efficient than that proposed in the Bill. We believe that with the existing powers under the Act of 1902 strengthened as they will be, this Bill, in no degree weakened by the concessions to be made, will be fully adequate to prevent the creation or to secure the prompt suppression of clubs which are really drinking clubs. When we add all the minor proposals which make up its bulk, we believe we have in the Bill a very large body of temperance reform. The control of the people over the grant of new licences, the further restrictions of the hours of Sunday opening, the larger powers of reducing licences in Wales, the greater control in many particulars of the local justices, the restrictions on children being taken into the bars of public-houses—a clause which I sincerely trust the House will be willing to strengthen—the regulations for the sale of liquor on passenger vessels, the more effective provision for dealing with the hawking of liquor, all these and many other details constitute, we venture to say, really a large measure of temperance reform. Of course, the representatives of the liquor trade must say it does nothing for temperance. Nobody expected them to say it did anything for temperance. We cannot imagine them going about declaring: "I know this Bill will do good, but I make an income out of the evil, and I shall oppose it." Consequently, their process of thought appears to be this: "I draw an income from the liquor trade. This Bill will lessen my income. I must, therefore, find a justification for opposing it. So I must argue and believe that it will do nothing for temperance." And so close often is the connection between faith and interest that I have no doubt many of them do come in time absolutely and conscientiously to believe that this Bill will really effect nothing for temperance. But we claim, and are entitled to claim, that this Bill is by far the most comprehensive and effective measure of temperance reform ever submitted in modern times to this House, and that it fulfils to the full the pledge given to the nation by our Leader whose loss to-day we so deeply deplore.

I turn now to deal with the second portion of the attack upon the Bill—the argument that its finance is unjust. First, with reference to the time-limit. The time-limit, of course, is of the essence of the Bill. We stand upon the principle that what has been created by the State belongs to the State. There can be confiscation from the State as well as from the individual. There can be robbery of public property as well as of private. The nation in this Bill is not endeavouring to take from any man what is rightfully his; it is only determined to resume what is rightfully its own. There has been, and it is apparent in this debate, much misunderstanding as to what is really the monopoly value which is proposed to be taken at the end of the time-limit. The hon. Member who proposed the Amendment has said that drinking will go on, and that the only difference will be that the State will take the profits; and the hon. Member who seconded him declared that the object of the Bill was to confiscate the whole industry. The monopoly value that can be taken under the Bill at the end of the time-limit does not include—and let this be emphatically stated and clearly understood—the ordinary trade profit of the publican. It does not include the normal trade profit of the brewer. It does not include the goodwill of either. It does not include the value of the buildings. All that it includes is merely the value of the advantage which is conferred on the owner of particular premises by the exclusion of free competition from his neighbourhood. The right to impose this time-limit we assert can hardly be contested. The Act of 1828, on which the whole of our licensing system is now based, declares that a licence is to remain in force for one whole year and no longer. Hon. Members opposite interpret these words as meaning that the licence shall remain in force indefinitely unless forfeited by misconduct or bought up at full value. Those are not the words of the Act. That has not been the practice of the justices. In the year before the Act of 1904 no fewer than 837 licences were reduced, the majority of them on the ground merely that they were not required, and no penny of compensation was paid for any one of them, and that fact, as we all know, was the real reason for the introduction and passage of the Act of 1904, and the right hon. Gentleman's cheers show that he agrees with that view. But when they introduced that Bill of 1904 the very scheme of their Bill gave a denial to their own contention. As my right hon. friend the Prime Minister said on the First Reading of the Bill, in an argument which no Member opposite has attempted to answer, because it is unanswerable, if licences are property, why were the owners of that property called upon to compensate themselves? I invite the right hon. Gentleman opposite who I believe will follow me in this debate to give an answer to the question and explain why it is, if these licences are property, the licence-owners and not the State should be called upon to compensate them for suppression. It is indeed a strange kind of property for which, when it is taken away, the owner of the property has to pay compensation out of his own pocket. That there is an expectation is admitted; it is undeniable and undenied. We are of course bound by the conditions of the past. All progress is a compromise between the past and the ideal, between what has been and what ought to be. If there had not been that expectation in the past there would be no compensation and no time-limit, and the compensation and the time-limit are inserted in consequence of the existence of that expectation.

Before coming to the question of the length of the time-limit and the method of payment of compensation, I should like to answer one preliminary point which has been made by some hon. Members opposite, who have asserted that we are treating with unfairness at all events the ante-1869 beerhouses. In 1870, by an astounding provision, for no reason that one can ascertain, those licences were given the privilege that they were not to be forfeited except on grounds of misconduct; but as early as 1879 a committee of the House of Lords, which is no very confiscatory or revolutionary tribunal, unanimously recommended that the ante-1869 houses should be put on precisely the same footing as the ordinary public-houses, and in 1904 the right hon. Gentleman seized the opportunity and carried that recommendation into effect. They have already had a time-limit of thirty-nine years and they will have fourteen years more after the Act comes into operation, which is surely a sufficient period to meet the equities of the case. In reference to the number of years' time-limit I may point out in the first place that, although fourteen years is the number stated in the Bill, the time-limit is really fifteen years, for the end does not come until April, 1923, since the Act only comes into operation at the beginning of next year. There are two questions before us, first, whether the period of fourteen or fifteen years is really long enough, and, secondly, whether the assessment of compensation meantime is just and equitable. A gloomy picture has been painted of the position of the brewery trade. We are told of the decline in demand, of higher taxation, and of the burden of the compensation levy, and now this crowning blow of the forfeiture of the monopoly value at the end of the time-limit. Against this there are many offsets to the advantage of the trade which ought in fairness to be taken into account. In recent years there has been a great fall in the price of materials used by the brewery industry. There has been a remarkable concentration into fewer hands. There are only a tenth of the number of brewers now that there were half a century ago, and that has resulted in economies that come from production on a large scale and from more scientific methods of manufacture which, though they may not always produce a more wholesome product, bring more profit to the brewer. It should be remembered also--and this is a point which has not yet been made in this debate, though it is of great importance—that many of these companies in anticipation, as we believe, of this very time-limit, and in view of the insecurity of their licences, had made it their business to build up reserve funds for the protection of their shareholders. I have had an examination made from the sources of information which are generally open, and also from many balance sheets of brewery companies that are not usually published, and I find that taking the companies to the figures of which I have had access, not all, by any means, there exists at the present time in England and Wales a reserve fund of no less than £13,500,000.

From that it is only fair to deduct £2,500,000, for that includes the firm of Guinness, which is really an Irish firm and ought not to be counted. That leaves £11,000,000, and there are many other brewery companies whose reserve funds I have not ascertained, as well as distillery companies which have considerable reserve funds and large interests in licensed property, and there are, of course, many private individuals who have made provision against the possibility of such a proposal as the time-limit.

MR. YOUNGER (Ayr Burghs): Will the hon. Gentleman tell the House how these funds are invested?

*MR. HERBERT SAMUEL: They are very largely invested in licences and other securities, but that does not in the slightest degree alter my argument. The reserve funds surely stand on a different footing from subscribed capital. If a group of companies has £10,000,000 in licences and then they put by £2,000,000 of reserve in order to make good the insecurity of their licences, and if they invest that reserve in fresh licences, and therefore hold £12,000,000, my contention is that if the licences do prove to be insecure, the shareholders will already have made provision for £2,000,000 of whatever loss there may be, and that the actual provision remaining to be made is the £10,000,000 which represents their subscribed capital, and not the whole sum of £12,000,000 which represents the subscribed capital plus the reserve fund. Therefore, whether those reserve funds are or are not invested in additional licences, it does not alter the contention that in so far as the reserve funds exist so far they relieve the burden of those who have subscribed the original capital of the companies. But that £11,000,000 of reserve funds already accumulated is not all. In the last year there was added to the reserve funds a sum of at least £225,000. It was more than that, but those are the figures of the companies whose balance sheets I have been able to ascertain. That annual increase in fifteen years at compound interest of 4 per cent., which is not a high interest, would amount to a further sum of £4,500,000. In addition to that there is the compensation levy which is now being paid by the trade, which in fifteen years will amount to £16,500,000. One can only form the vaguest estimate as to what proportion of that will be found in fact to go to the owners of the properties, and what proportion to the licence-holders. At least we may assume that £11,500,000 will go to the owners of the licensed properties. If you add these together the trade will be found at the end of the time-limit to have in hand, without bearing the charge of a single extra sixpence of expenditure, £27,000,000 towards the loss of their monopoly value. If it were fair to add the interest on the existing £11,000,000 or reserve funds, they would have a further sum of £8,800,000. I do not emphasise that £8,000,000, although some people might contend that the interest on the reserve funds now invested might be properly put by. It is impossible to estimate the total value of the licences in this country. No figures exist on which any precise or approximate estimate can be formed. It is certainly very much below the sum that was originally paid for the licence values. The Inland Revenue Department stated in December, 1905, that in face of the facts and figures available

> they felt they must pay very little attention to the price actually paid in the past by the brewers for licensed premises, but must regard them as evidence of the accidental value realised for the property by the holder for whom it is acquired, rather than as a guide to the prices which the present holder might hope to obtain in the open market."

That fact sweeps away practically all the estimates published in the papers as to the losses which will fall upon brewery companies owing to the time-limit, because almost without exception they are based on the cost value of the licences, and it is notorious that the values have fallen very greatly since the time when they were bought. But it is certain, of course, that the value of the licences will be considerably more than the £30,000,000 or £40,000,000 which the companies will have in hand to recoup themselves at the end of the period. The question really is whether the period of fourteen years is sufficient to enable them to make the provision that is required. The minority of the Peel Commission recommended a period of seven years; Mr. Bruce in his Bill of 1871 proposed a period of ten years. The Government have suggested in their Bill a figure of fourteen. But, as my right hon. friend has said, he is very ready to listen to any well-authenticated facts which will tend to show that such a period is either too long or too short for the purpose which it has in view. I come now to the question of whether the compensation during the reduction period is being assessed on a fair value. The reduction of 30,000 licences is not net loss to the trade, for they will save greatly in rent, management, and other incidental expenses attaching to those public-houses. One may venture to affirm that if all the public-houses belonged to one great trust it would not dream of maintaining them in the same numbers as now, not for the sake of temperance but as a business matter, and it would immediately set itself to work to reduce the plethora of public-houses. But since competition prevents such a voluntary reduction, since a brewer cannot close one house out of the three he owns in a town unless the competing brewer will also close one house out of his three, the State steps in, from quite another motive it is true, and does by this Bill what the trade would do for itself as a business matter if it had the power. It is true that we carry the process somewhat further for the sake of temperance than the brewers would for business reasons, but out of the 30,000 houses that would go, if they are fairly selected among the competing owners, the trade will be glad to be rid of half of them and the closing of them will be regarded more as a relief than a burden. In selecting the Schedule A value for the basis of the compensation, we are only taking the financial arrangement adopted by the Board of Inland Revenue under the late Government as their interpretation of the Act of 1904, and going back merely to the days before the Kennedy judgment.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN (Worcestershire, E.): The hon. Gentleman speaks of the late Government, but surely he does not mean to suggest that that was an executive act of the late Government?

*MR. HERBERT SAMUEL: Yes, of course, it was done on the right hon. Gentleman's authority.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: No. It was not. I was Chancellor of the

Exchequer. A distinct duty was cast upon the Inland Revenue authorities, and the duty was of a judicial character. I did not in any way influence the Board of Inland Revenue in their interpretation of the Act. I regarded it as a matter on which I had no right to express an opinion, I should have felt I was committing the gravest breach of duty if, as Chancellor of the Exchequer, I had endeavoured to influence the Board of Inland Revenue in their interpretation of the Act.

*MR. HERBERT SAMUEL: The right hon. Gentleman disclaims responsibility, but the fact remains that the interpretation placed by the Board of Inland Revenue upon the Act for which the right hon. Gentleman and his colleagues are responsible is that the right basis of assessment is the Schedule A valuation.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: Yes, but that was subject to appeal to the Courts, and on the appeal to the Courts the Board of Inland Revenue were found to be wrong.

*MR. HERBERT SAMUEL: The basis of valuation which is adopted by Mr. Justice Kennedy in his judgment undoubtedly goes far beyond what would be the intention of any Member of this House—certainly on this side of the House—either in 1904 or at any other time, in interpreting what is really the licensed value of a house. The Kennedy judgment does go beyond the licence value of the public-house as a place of retail sale, and includes an element of the profit which the owner of the premises derives through his wholesale trade from the house. The effect of that judgment has been to increase by 50 per cent., sometimes by 100 per cent., the cost of compensation, and if the necessary reduction is to be effected without a large increase of the compensation levy it is essential to go back to what we believe to be the fair basis of licence value. And the compensation must necessarily diminish as the time limit draws towards a close. It is obviously wrong that a house suppressed in the fourteenth year should get the same compensation as a house suppressed in the first year. Before 1904 the tenure of a public-house licence may be compared with an annual lease with some expectation of renewal. After 1904 it was converted into a freehold tenure subject to good behaviour, and a small compensation charge. We propose now to convert the tenure, not into an annual tenancy again, but into a fourteen years' lease, rent free except for the compensation levy. It is clear that if a man has a lease of fourteen years of his house, and that house is closed, he would be entitled to compensation in proportion to the duration of the lease which remained. On that basis only can compensation, consistent with the general provisions of the Bill, be calculated. With regard to the position of the publican, the publican has very little reason to be satisfied with his present state of things. If for the most part the publicans are opposed to the Bill it is because their political activities are often tied as well as their custom. [OPPOSITION cries of "Oh, oh!"] But it is not the case that the effect of the measure will be to throw upon the streets 30,000 licence-holders. The reduction will be gradual, about 2,400 a year, and the wastage of the trade already must be far greater than that. There has been some misunderstanding on the point of assessment. Under the present law the value of the licence is assessed according to its value to the owner of the premises. It is assessed on an extravagant scale, as the Government believe. The owner's value is then divided between the owner and the licensee—last year the division was in the proportion of eight-ninths to the owner and one-ninth to the licensee. That is unjust to both parties. It is unjust to the owner, because another interest is compensated out of the sum which is intended to represent the value of his own interest alone. It is unjust to the licensee because, if in a particular case the owner's value is small, the tenant may be awarded quite inadequate compensation. The scheme of the Bill will secure the assessment of the actual owner's value on a moderate but sufficient and just scale, securing to the owner the whole of that value, while the tenant's compensation will be calculated on a separate basis and paid to him directly. I think the hon. Baronet the Member for Chippenham overlooked that point when he assumed that the compensation under this Bill would be unduly small. Now I come to the effect of this Bill as regards employment generally, and I must say a few words as to the position of the barmaids. It may be necessary to prevent the possibility of hardship from being done under the Bill to women now engaged in this trade, and we shall, therefore, devise some form of personal certificate for the protection and benefit of those who now hold situations as barmaids. Perhaps in the future in the language of the Licensing Law the term "ante-1908 barmaids" may become as well-known as the ante-1869 beer-houses. But there is another party vitally interested in this question, besides the owners of licensed premises and the publicans and their employees, and that is the taxpayers and the ratepayers at large. At the end of the time-limit we believe that the monopoly value will bring to the public purse an abounding revenue, and more important than that, the indirect savings to the community through the operation of the Bill will be large. Millions and tens of millions are being spent in restraint of the criminal, in support of the lunatic, and in the maintenance of the pauper. If by this Bill the Government succeed in lessening, as we believe we shall be able to lessen, a main source of these heavy charges, we shall indeed have done much to lighten the burdens that press upon the people.

Motion made, and Question, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Long*)—put, and agreed to.

Debate to be resumed to-morrow.

SUMMARY JURISDICTION (IRELAND) BILL.

Read a second time, and committed to a Standing Committee.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the House do now adjourn."—(*Mr. George Whiteley.*)

MR. CLAUDE HAY (Shoreditch, Hoxton): Can the Parliamentary Secretary inform me when the Education Bill will be proceeded with?

THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. GEORGE WHITELEY, Yorkshire, W.R., Pudsey): That is a question which must be addressed to the Prime Minister.

Adjourned at fourteen minutes after Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Wednesday, 29*th April*, 1908.

The House met at a quarter before Three of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

London United Tramways Bill (by Order).—Read a second time, and committed.

Local Government Provisional Order (No. 3) Bill.—"To confirm a Provisional Order of the Local Government Board relating to the Boroughs of Burslem, Hanley, Longton, and Stoke-upon-Trent, and the Urban Districts of Fenton and Tunstall," presented by Mr. Masterman; supported by Mr. Burns; read the first time; to be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 201.]

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 4) Bill.—"To confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board relating to Bromley, Crewe, Milford Haven, Rhyl, Sawbridgeworth, and York," presented by Mr. Masterman; supported by Mr. Burns; read the first time; to be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 202.]

Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill.—"To confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under the Electric Lighting Acts, 1882 and 1888, relating to Bispham-with-Norbreck, Caldy Manor, Carmarthen, Fleetwood, Halesowen, Heswall, Lowestoft (Amendment), Lymington (Extension), Portsmouth (Amendment), Southampton (Amendment), and Woking (Extension)," presented by Mr. Kearley; read the first time; to be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 203.]

Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill.—"To confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under the Electric Lighting Acts, 1882, and 1888, The Electric Lighting (Scotland) Act, 1890, and The Electric Lighting (Scotland) Act, 1902, relating to Barrhead, Clydebank (Amendment), Dundee (Extension), and Rutherglen (Amendment)," presented by Mr. Kearley; read the first time; to be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 204.]

London County Council (Money) Bill.—"To regulate the expenditure of money by the London County Council on capital account during the current financial period and the raising of money to meet such expenditure; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

PETITIONS.

CHILDREN BILL.

Petitions in favour: From Brigg; Glasgow; Kidderminster; Inverness; and Islington; to lie upon the Table.

COAL MINES (EIGHT HOURS) (No. 2) BILL.

Petitions against: From Aberdeen; Horwich; and North Staffordshire Chamber of Commerce; to lie upon the Table.

COAL MINES (EIGHT HOURS) (No. 2) BILL.

Petitions in favour: From Aberaman Colliery; Aberbeeg; Abercwmboi Colliery; Allhallows Pit; Alsager's Bank; Ammanford (No. 1); Arrail Griffin; Ashton Field; Audley; Bargoed; Batley (No. 1) Branch; Batley West End; Bedwellty Pits (No. 1); Bestwood; Birlog; Birley Collieries (No. 2); Bishop Sutton; Blackbreas; Black Heath (No. 1); Blackhill; Blackwood (two); Blaennant Colliery; Boglea; Bowlings; Brithdir; British-Rhondda Colliery; Bromley; Broxtowe; Brown Edge; Brynhenllys; Bucknall Lodge; Bunkers Hill (three); Burslem Lodge; Buttlane Lodge; Bwllfa Colliery; Cædder; Caeren; Callendar; Carluke; Carranhall; Cheadle; Cheadle Park; Cinder Hill; Coalburn; Crown Lodge; Tredegar Valley; Cwm; Cwmaman Colliery; Cwmtillery; Denaby Main; Dinnington; Douglas Water; Dowlais; Dulais;

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

East Ardsley; Easton; Ebbw Vale; Empire Colliery; Farrington; Fenton; Fforchaman; Forth; Foxfield; Gedling; Gerrards; Glasshoughton; Golden Hill; Goldthorpe, Thurncoe, and Bolton; Gorllwyn; Grange Colliery; Gray Lodge (Monmouth); Halmer End; Hanford; Hanley (five); Hodroyd; Howden Clough; Howley Bark; Hultons; Kidsgrove (three); Knutton; Llay Hall; Lletty Shinkin Colliery; Longton (two); Low Laithes; Lower Conygre; Maddeston; Madeley; Mansfield; Moresley; Milton Lodge; Morley Main; Moston; Mortlyr; Mossband Colliery; Mow Cop; New Haden Colliery; Norton Green (two); Norton Hill; Oatlands Pit; Old Mills; Oliver Ward; Ossett Roundwood; Padell-y-Bwlch Colliery; Partan; Pewchapel Colliery; Pochin; Radford; Rhymney; Robin Hood; Rockingham; Rookery; Squborwen Colliery (two); Silverdale (two); Sneyd Colliery; Springfield; Stafford; Sugdale; Swinhill; Talke (three); Tankersley; Tegswood; Thornhill; Thrushbush; Tillery; Tingley; Tredegar; Trowell Moor; Tunstall; Ty Trist (No. 2); Victoria Colliery; Waterloo Main Branch; Watermills; Wath Main; Werfa Colliery; Wharncliffe (No. 3); Wharncliffe Silkstone; Wharton Hall; Wheat Sheaf Colliery (two); Whitehaven; White Rose; Whitworth (No. 1); Whitworth (No. 2); Wimblebury; Wollaton; and Wythemoor; to lie upon the Table.

DAIRIES (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Renfrewshire, against; to lie upon the Table.

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL.

Petitions in favour: From Blaenau Festiniog; Bromsgrove; Corwen; Hebden Bridge; Leighton Buzzard; Llanbadarnfawr; Mytholmroyd; Towyn; and Twyford; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSING BILL.

Petitions against: From Aldershot (two); Armley (three); Banbury; Bath (two); Batley; Bedworth; Birmingham, South; Bridgtown; Bridport, etc.; Catcliffe; Chester le Street; Chipping Norton; Durham, North-West; Farnham; Fishlake; Gravesend; Grays; Great Grimsby; Hallamshire (two); Handsworth (three); Harley (two); Highworth; Holmes; Hook Norton; Horsforth (two); Hoyland; Hull (three); Ickles; Incorporated Society of Licensed Victuallers; Keighley; Kilnhurst; Kingswinford; Leeds (ten); Licensed Victuallers' Asylum (two); Masborough; Millom; Middlesbrough (fifty-nine); Mirfield; Monmouth (two); Morley (three); Mortomley; Newhill; Newton Bromswold; New Wortley; Ossett; Oxford; Pangbourne; Parkgate (two); Rawmarsh (three); Reading (two); Redditch; Rodley; Rotherham (eight); Scarborough; Sheffield (Central Division); Sheffield (Ecclesall); Sheffield (Hallam) (three); South Elmsall; South Suffolk; Stourbridge; Sudbury (two); Sunderland; Thornhill; Todmorden; Vale of Leven; Walthamstow; West Dorset; West Hartlepool; Whitby; Whitstable; Willenhall; Wolverhampton; and Woodbridge; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSING BILL.

Petitions for alterations: From Allerton; Babell; Beilidu; Belper; Bradford (Yorks); Brych-goed; Burslem; Buttershaw; Cwmcamlais; Devynock (two); Doncaster; Glasgow; Greenhill; Horton; Islington; Leeds; Nantybran (two); Newcastle; Nottingham; Old Hutton; Peterborough; Ryton-on-Tyne; Senny Bridge (two); Trallwm; and Trecastle; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSING BILL.

Petitions in favour: From Abercrave; Aberdeen (three); Aberdovey; Abergavenny (seven); Abertillery; Abertysswg; Aberyscir; Accrington (fifteen); Acocks Green; Airdrie (two); Aldershot (two); Allarnun; Alsagar; Alston Cross; Alton; Alva; Andlem; Ardrishaig; Armley; Armside; Auchindon; Aylsham; Bacup (two); Baddesley Ensor; Baddiley; Barbridge; Bardsley; Bargoed; Barmouth; Barrowford; Bath (seven); Batley (four); Beacontree Heath; Beamish; Beaufort (two); Bedlington; Belmont; Bembridge; Betley; Biggar; Blackenhall; Blackley; Blackwood; Blaenan (three); Blaenavon; Blaencown; Blaenffos; Blaina; Bolton (eleven); Borough Market; Boston;

Bottwnog; Bournemouth (two); Bradford; Brecon; Bridge of Weir; Bridgeton; Briercliffe; Brierton; Brigham; Brixton (six); Bromsgrove (two); Broomhill; Brynamman; Bryncemmaer; Brynmawr; Bucksburn; Bude; Builth Wells; Bulwell; Burnopfield; Burslem; Burton Latimer; Bury; Butley; Caersalam; Calverley; Camberwell; Carlisle; Carluke; Carnarvon (two); Carradale; Cartsdyke; Catford; Caton; Chadwell Heath; Chadworth; Chester le Street (two); Chopwell; Chorlton; Chorlton cum Hardy; Clackmannan; Clayton le Moors (two); Cleator Moor; Clevedon; Clynderwen; Coatbridge; Colne; Comhill on Tweed; Corwen; Coulsdon; Cove; Coventry; Cowes; Cowling; Craghead (two); Craithie; Criccieth (three); Cricklewood; Cromer; Crowborough; Crymmych (two); Cults; Cwmtwrch; Dalkeith; Delabole; Denaby; Dewsbury; Dyce; Dinnyloanhead; Distington; Doals; Doncaster (two); Donside; Douglas, N.B.; Douglas Water; Dovenby; Droitwich; Drusycoed; Dufftown; Dulwich; Dumbarton; Dunfermline; Dunoon; Duns (two); Dunston on Tyne; Earlsfield (three); East Gloucestershire; East Ham (two); Eastwood; Ebbw Vale; Edgworth; Edinburgh; Erith; Faddiley; Failsworth (three); Farnworth; Fordingbridge; Forest Gate; Forres; Four Lanes; Frizington; Fulham; Galley Hill; Gateshead on Tyne (three); Garndiffaith; Garn Dolbenmaen; Gateshead; Glascoed; Glasgow (fifteen); Glossop; Gorleston; Gorwydd; Govan (nine); Govanhill; Grange Villa; Grays; Great Harwood; Greenlaw; Greenock (nineteen); Greenwich; Groanhill; Groeglon; Guston; Halifax (two); Hamsterley; Ham Bridge; Hanging Heaton; Hanston; Harley; Hartlepool (six); Hatherton; Haverigg; Haworth; Hay; Hay Mills; Heaton; Hebden Bridge (two); Helston; Hendon (two); Henfield; Hexham; Heywood (two); Hillsbro'; Holbeck (two); Holloway, London (two); Honddu Vale; Honor Oak; Hove; Hoylake; Hoyland; Hull (six); Hulme (two); Ilford (three); Ingleborough; Inverness (five); Inverurie; Irthlingborough; Islay; Jedburgh; Keighley (three); Kendal (five); Kenmay; Kettering (fifteen); Kidderminster; Kilbrandin; Kincardine; Kingston on Hull; Kinross (two); Kirkby Lonsdale; Kirkstall; Knowle Park; Lanark (three); Lancaster (ten); Lambeth; Laurencekirk; Leeds; Lee Mount; Leigh (eight); Leighton Buzzard; Lesmahagow; Letterstone; Levenshulme; Lewes; Leyton; Lichfield; Linlithgow; Little Lever; Liverpool (two); Llanaethaiarn; Llanbedr (three); Llandelre; Llandovery; Llanelly; Llanfymach; Llanfyrnach; Llangadock; Llangammarch; Llannon; Llanover; Llansadwrn Llanvapley; Llanvihangel; Llanwrtyd Wells; Llwynyrhwrdd; Lochwinnoch; Long Eaton; Lowca; Lower Chapel; Lower Cwmtwrch; Low Hill; Lower Wincobank; Luddenden Foot (two); Lumb in Rossendale; Lumphanin; Luton (two); Lynturk; Maesteg; Maiden Wells; Maidstone (two); Malvern Mankelow; Manor Park (two); Martin Top; Melton Constable; Mexborough (two); Middlesbrough; Midmar; Millom (two); Moelwyn; Moncrieff (two); Morley (two); Moseley; Mossley; Moss Side; Moston; Mull; Muswell Hill; Mya Sound Unit; Nairn; Nanturch; Nelson; Nettlesworth; Newcastle on Tyne (two); Newhills; Newport (Isle of Wight); New Tredegar (two); New Washington; Nitshill; Northampton (eight); North Kelsey; North Salford; North Walsham; Northwich; Norwich (nine); Nottingham (three); Notting Hill; Nuneaton; Ossett; Oswaldtwistle (two); Ouston; Ovenden; Oxford (four); Paisley; Partick (three); Paynton (three); Pendlebury; Penge; Pentrelygwyn; Pennal; Penrhyndendreath; Penygroes; Penzance (two); Plymouth; Pontnewyndd; Poole; Portisham; Portmoak; Premnay; Preston (Hull); Prestwich; Princeville; Pumpsaint; Pydeltrenthide (two); Radcliffe (two); Ramsbottom; Ramsough; Rhymney (three); Ripponden (three); Riveton Park; Roberton; Rodley; Romsey (two); Rotherham (two); Rowlands Castle; Royton; Rugby; Rugeley; Rushden; Rutherford; St. Abbs; St. George's in the East; St. Mary Cray; Salisbury; Saundersfoot; Scarborough; Scotstoun;

Sedburgh; Sennbyridge; Seren Dyfi; Sheffield (thirteen); Sheringham; Shoreham; Sidcup; Siloh; Skene (two); Skipton (two); Southwick; Sowerby Bridge; Sparkhill; Stafford; Stand; Stirling (two); Stithians; Stockport; Stone; Stonehaven; Stonehouse, N.B. (two); Stranræer; Strathaven (two); Streatham; Street; Stretford; Stromness (three); Styal; Summerstown; Sunniside; Swancombe; Swindon; Talybont (two); Talgarth (three); Tamworth; Temple Cloud; Thorne; Tillicoultry; Todmorden; Tooting; Totton; Trecastle; Tredegar; Trenddyn (three); Trevor; Tunbridge Wells; Upper Tooting; Urmston; Waldridge Fell (two); Walkden; Walsall; Wandsworth (nine); Wanstead (two); Warestow; Washington Station; Waterfoot; Weirdale; Wellingborough; West Dorset; West Dulwich; West Norwood; Westruther (two); Wettenhall; Whitegate; Whiteinch; Willaston; Wilsden (two); Wimbledon; Winlaton; Witheridge; Wood Green; Woore; Wootton Bridge; Worcester; Workington; Worthing; Wroxall (two); and Wybunbury; to lie upon the Table.

LIGHTS ON VEHICLES (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Renfrewshire, against; to lie upon the Table.

LIQUOR TRAFFIC (LOCAL OPTION) (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Clackmannanshire, against; to lie upon the Table.

LIQUOR TRAFFIC (LOCAL OPTION) (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petitions in favour: From Airdrie; Cunningsburgh; Douglas; Drumlemble; Dunoon (two); Dunrossan; Flotta; Govan; Hillhead and Kelvinside; Insch; Inverness; Lerwick; Lochwinnoch; Mid Lanark; St. Margaret's Hope; and Virkie; to lie upon the Table.

PUBLIC-HOUSES (EXCLUSION OF CHILDREN) (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petitions in favour: From Ardrossan; Glasgow; and Hillhead and Kelvinside; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF FOOD AND DRUGS ACTS (AMENDMENT) (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Ayr, against; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF FOOD AND DRUGS ACTS (AMENDMENT) (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Renfrewshire, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY BILL.

Eleven Petitions from Gateshead, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

EXPLOSIONS (DINAS MAIN COLLIERY).

Copy presented, of Report to the Secretary of State for the Home Department by William Atkinson and J. Dyer Lewis, His Majesty's Inspectors of Mines, upon the circumstances attending an Explosion of Coal Dust at Dinas Main Colliery on 14th December, 1907 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

SHOP HOURS ACT, 1904 (COUNTY BOROUGH OF CROYDON).

Copy presented, of Order made by the Council of the County Borough of Croydon, and confirmed by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, fixing the Hours of Closing for Butchers' Shops within a certain part of the Borough [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND) (GENERAL REPORTS).

Copy presented, of General Report by the Chief Inspector of the Western Division of Scotland for the year 1907 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS SECURITIES.

Return ordered, "of the Amounts of British Government Securities held by the several Government Departments and other Public Offices on the 31st day of March, 1908, specifying whether held in England or Ireland (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 159, of Session 1907)—

£2½ per Cent. Consols.	£2¾ per Cents. (1905).	£2½ per Cents.	£2¾ per Cent. War Loan.	Other Securities.	
				Annuties for terms of years.	Exchequer Bonds and Treasury Bills.

—(*Mr. Hobhouse.*)

NATIONAL PHYSICAL LABORATORY.

Copy ordered, "of Account of Receipts and Expenditure of the National Physical Laboratory, with Balance Sheet, for the year 1907."—(*Mr. Hobhouse.*)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Hackney Unemployed.

Mr. HART-DAVIES (Hackney, N.): To ask the President of the Local Government Board whether a grant, under the provisions of the Unemployed Workmen Act of 1905, has been applied for by the Hackney Borough Council; and, if so, whether it has been refused, and on what grounds.

(*Answered by Mr. John Burns.*) I do not find that I have received any application from the Hackney Borough Council for a payment from the Parliamentary grant in aid of expenditure under the Unemployed Workmen Act, 1905. I may add that the borough council were not a body to whom payments from the grant could be made. In London, such payments were only made to the Central (Unemployed) Body.

Re-election of Ministers on Attaining Cabinet Rank.

Sir WILLIAM HOLLAND (Yorkshire, W.R., Rotherham): To ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he will consider the propriety, in the public interest, of taking the requisite steps to relieve Ministers of the Crown from the necessity of seeking re-election on attaining Cabinet rank.

(*Answered by Mr. Asquith.*) I am disposed to think, with my hon. friend, that the necessity for seeking re-election is out of date and not in accordance with public interest or convenience. But its removal would require legislation, for which, in the pressure of more urgent matters, there is not at present room.

Milk Legislation.

Mr. JESSE COLLINGS (Birmingham, Bordesley): To ask the President of the Local Government Board whether, in the Bill he proposes to bring forward with regard to milk supply, he can find means to provide that foreign fresh milk shall not be sold in this country unless it is produced under conditions or restrictions as regards sanitation at least equal to those to be imposed on British farmers and cowkeepers.

(*Answered by Mr. John Burns.*) I am afraid I cannot undertake to say beforehand what provisions will be contained in the Bill I propose to introduce with regard to milk supply.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

H.M.S. "Gladiator."

Mr. BELLAIRS (Lynn Regis): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty in view of the fact that sister ships to H.M.S. "Gladiator" which are in full commission carry as many as five lieutenants, or four lieutenants, and a sub-lieutenant, for watch-keeping duties, in addition to the specialist gunnery and navigating lieutenants, and that the Navy List where this information is given shows no lieutenants whatever for watch-keeping duties on board H.M.S. "Gladiator," and only the specialist gunnery and navigating lieutenants who have very arduous duties to perform, whether he can state if any watch-keeping lieutenants were drafted into H.M.S. "Gladiator" for her cruise in very bad weather from Plymouth to Sheerness via Portsmouth.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. McKENNA Monmouthshire, N.): All the lieutenants are available for watch-keeping duties. With regard to the last part of the Question, Lieutenant M. C. Brotherton was lent for service in the "Gladiator," so that there were three lieutenants in the ship available besides the commander.

MR. BELLAIRS: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty what is the full complement of H.M.S. "Gladiator"; and what was the size of the nucleus crew with which she proceeded from Plymouth to Portsmouth en route to Sheerness.

MR. McKENNA: The full complement is—23 officers, 424 men, total 447. The nucleus crew on board was—13 officers, 244 men, total 257.

MR. BELLAIRS: Does that include the supernumeraries on passage?

MR. McKENNA: No, Sir. They are not included in the nucleus crew.

Naval War Training.

MR. MENZIES (Lanarkshire, S.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty a Question of which I have given him some notice, *i.e.*, whether it is necessary in his opinion for the efficiency of our Navy that ships should patrol the seas in mimic warfare during the night without lights, breaking all ordinary maritime law and becoming a constant danger to merchant ships with their crews and passengers, as well as to the lives of His Majesty's sailors.

MR. McKENNA: I thank the hon. Member for having given me notice. If the Fleet is to maintain its high efficiency some amount of risk must always be taken. The Board of Admiralty may be relied upon to prevent unnecessary risk being run in the war training of the Fleet and to issue any such fresh instructions as may be necessary from time to time to minimise this. These exercises are undertaken hundreds of times, and the number of accidents that occur are remarkably few.

Mobilisation of the Gibraltar Garrison—Gunners' Hours of Duty.

MR. ASHLEY (Lancashire, Blackpool): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if he will state during what number of hours out of each twenty-four the gunners were on duty at Gibraltar during the recent mobilisation of the garrison; and whether the number of gunners in the garrison is sufficient to keep the batteries continuously manned in the event of a siege.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (Mr. ACLAND, Yorkshire Richmond): No report of the mobilisation mentioned has yet reached the War Office. I am not therefore in a position to deal with the hon. Member's Question.

MR. ASHLEY: When will the report be received?

MR. ACLAND: I will let the hon. Member know when we receive it.

Territorial Artillery Guns.

MR. ASHLEY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War when shields for the guns of the Territorial Artillery will be issued; and what will be the weight of the gun and shield as compared with the gun and shield of the regular Field Artillery.

MR. ACLAND: The pattern of shield has not yet been settled, and I am not therefore able to say when the shields are likely to be issued. The weight of the gun and shield of the converted 15-pr. will be 25 cwt. 2 qrs. 24 lbs. as against 24 cwt. 3 qrs. 21 lbs. for the 18-pr. Q. F. gun.

MR. COURTHOPE (Sussex, Rye): When will the accessories necessary to enable these guns to be used for practice be supplied?

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member had better give notice of that Question.

Army Horses.

MR. NEWNES (Nottinghamshire, Bassetlaw): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether a scheme has been put forward for the purpose of encouraging the breeding of horses for the use of the Army; if so, whether he can give the details of this scheme; and whether he can state what he proposes to do in this matter.

Mr. ACLAND: I am not yet able to give my hon. friend any information beyond that which has already been given to the House to the effect that the negotiations with the Board of Agriculture are proceeding satisfactorily.

Earl WINTERTON (Sussex, Horsham): Was the account of the proposed scheme which appeared in the Press official or was it a leakage?

Mr. ACLAND: I am afraid I must ask for notice.

Army Estimates.

Mr. HAROLD COX (Preston): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether the figure quoted by him on the first page of his Memorandum accompanying the Army Estimates for the total of the Army Estimates for the year 1905–6, namely, £29,813,000, represents the Estimates as now arranged; and, if so, what is the meaning of the statement made on page 3 of the Army Estimates that this figure represents the Estimates as arranged in former years; and whether he wishes the Members of this House to take this figure or the figure £28,478,863 given in the Army Estimates as the true basis of comparison with his Estimates for the current year.

Mr. ACLAND: The figures £29,813,000 represent the total Estimates for the year 1905–6, and these total figures are not affected by the rearrangement of Army Votes. The figures £28,478,863 represent the total sum actually expended for the year 1905–6.

Mr. HAROLD COX: Which figures compare with the Estimates for the present year?

Mr. ACLAND: You must take the first figure; the second represents the expenditure and not an Estimate at all.

The Amir of Afghanistan and the Anglo-Russian Agreement.

Mr. SMEATON (Stirlingshire): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether the Amir of Afghanistan has yet signified his assent to the Afghan articles of the Anglo-Russian Agreement.

The FINANCIAL SECRETARY to the TREASURY (Mr. Charles Hobhouse, Bristol, E.): Perhaps I may be allowed to answer this Question in the absence of the Under-Secretary. The Answer is in the negative.

Mohmand Rising.

Mr. SMEATON: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether the Amir of Afghanistan has made any effort to prevent the influential Mulla Hazrat Sahib, supported by bodies of Afghan subjects, from joining in the Mohmand rising.

Mr. CHARLES HOBHOUSE: My hon. friend is informed that the Amir has taken action to prevent his subjects from joining in the rising and that it is producing the desired result.

Railway Surveys and Indian Frontier Troubles.

Mr. SMEATON: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether one important cause of the rising of the Mohmands is the projected railway across the old frontier up to the Afghan border; whether, in spite of the opposition of the tribes, and also of the Amir, to this railway, it is intended still to continue making the line; and whether, seeing that the Amir clearly indicated to the late Viceroy his dislike of so-called peaceful penetration by railway, he will consider the advisability of abandoning this project, which can at the best be of little use and must always be a cause of irritation.

Mr. CHARLES HOBHOUSE: There is no reason to suppose that the railway surveys recently carried out in British territory on the right bank of the Kabul River, outside the limits of the country inhabited by the Mohmands, have been a cause of the tribal rising. As regards the present position of the railway project and the attitude of the tribes and the Amir towards it, I would refer my hon. friend to the full statement on the subject made on 6th February last in reply to a Question from my right hon. friend the Member for the Forest of Dean.

*Sir CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): Is it not the case that in that reply it was admitted that the survey was carried on under fire from the Mohmands?

MR. CHARLES HOBHOUSE: I cannot admit that. The Answer was that some firing took place.

MR. REES (Montgomery Boroughs): Is it not the case that there is almost always some firing taking place in these regions?

MR. LUPTON (Lincolnshire, Sleaford): Is it advisable thus to continue irritating these mountain tribes?

MR. SMEATON: Has not the Amir protested more than once against the approach of the railway to his frontier?

MR. CHARLES HOBHOUSE: Not so far as I am aware.

***SIR CHARLES DILKE**: We are in rather a difficult position, because my hon. friend is not now officially connected with India, although he has been, and indeed has just returned from that country. Is it not the case that it has already been decided not to make this railway, the survey for which seems to have caused the firing?

***MR. SPEAKER**: The circumstance to which the right hon. Baronet has alluded seems to point to the desirability of giving notice of the Question.

Dinizulu.

MR. ELLIS (Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies what law of Natal empowers the Government of that Colony to arrest a British subject and detain him month after month in prison, as has been done in the case of Dinizulu, without formulating and informing the prisoner of the definite charge against him.

I beg further to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether Dinizulu is still confined to prison, and in that case have his legal advisers full access to him and to any papers that they may deem necessary, especially such as were taken from Dinizulu when arrested; whether any definite charges against Dinizulu have been formulated and communicated to him; and whether the date of his trial has been fixed.

THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Colonel SEELY, Liverpool, Abercromby): Perhaps I may take my right hon. friend's two Questions together. Dinuzulu is still confined to prison. The utmost access to the prisoner has, I am assured, all along been given to his counsel. The proceedings against Dinuzulu are being taken under the Ordinance of 1845 for regulating the manner of proceeding in criminal cases in Natal, and the indictment which will specify the exact charges on which the prisoner will be tried unless discharged by the magistrate, cannot as I understand be framed until he has been committed for trial. The long delay is regrettable, and the Secretary of State has been in communication with the Governor of Natal on the subject, who has telegraphed the following reply from Ministers:—"Dinuzulu's preliminary examination is proceeding as already stated and until it is completed no date can be fixed for trial. No papers were taken from him. He had between the date he was told to surrender and the date of his surrender some five days in which to arrange for the disposal of any correspondence. What this Government has is a mass of papers evidently abandoned and thrown about on the floor and elsewhere." The Secretary of State is again pressing for an answer as to the conclusion of the preliminary examination, even if only an approximate date can be given at the moment. I may add that Dinuzulu's advisers have full access to all statements and depositions used by or before the magistrate, with liberty to cross examine witnesses on them, and the Government of Natal has promised to give the usual opportunities to the defence to collect evidence before the trial comes on. I would remind my right hon. friend that, as my predecessor stated in reply to a question which he put on the 31st of March, if any grievance as to the course of the proceedings is felt to exist by Dinizulu's advisers, application can be made on his behalf to the higher Courts.

MR. ELLIS asked if under this Ordinance there was any limit to this preliminary examination; could a man be indefinitely detained before trial?

Colonel SEELY said no; so far as the Ordinance was concerned, there was no limit of time, but he thought it was reasonable to assume that the delay would not be inordinate. The Secretary of State was pressing to be informed as to the approximate length of the proceedings.

Mr. BYLES (Salford, N.) asked if there was any reason to suppose that the prolongation of the proceedings was with the idea of finding evidence to support charges which it was not yet possible to formulate—whether, in fact, it was a fishing inquiry.

Colonel SEELY said there was nothing at the Colonial Office that would give colour to such a suggestion. Though regrettable in many ways, so far as he had information the delay was not objected to by Dinizulu's counsel.

Law relating to Coroners.

*Sir W. J. COLLINS (St. Pancras, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether, in connection with the proposed reforms in the law relating to coroners, he will have regard to the representations made to the Lord Chancellor on this subject in March, 1907, by the Medico-Legal Society and by the London County Council.

*The UNDER-SECRETARY of STATE for the HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. Herbert Samuel, Yorkshire, Cleveland): My hon. friend will be aware that the subject of death certification was fully dealt with by a Select Committee of the House of Commons, which reported in 1893, and that the proposals to which he refers are substantially covered by that Committee's recommendations. The Secretary of State has under consideration, as I announced on the Second Reading of the Coroners' Inquests Bill, the question of appointing a Departmental Committee to inquire into certain points relating to coroners' inquests, and so far as the proposed reforms affect coroners, they would come within its scope, and form part of its investigation.

*Sir W. J. COLLINS: Is the hon. Gentleman aware that the Report of the Select Committee to which he refers has not achieved any legislative result up to the present time?

*Mr. HERBERT SAMUEL: I am aware of that, and I think it very desirable that the Departmental Committee, so far as the terms of reference allow, should review the question.

Children Bill and Crêches.

Sir W. J. COLLINS: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he will be prepared to consider the introduction of a new clause into the Children Bill to enable local authorities to establish and maintain crêches, or day nurseries, where children of parents engaged on work away from home may be received and cared for during the daytime at reasonable charges.

Mr. HERBERT SAMUEL: The subject comes within the purview of the Local Government Board rather than of the Home Office, and the Secretary of State cannot undertake to deal with it in the Children Bill.

Intemperance on Election Days.

Mr. BOTTOMLEY (Hackney, S.); I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he can state the number of persons arrested for drunkenness in Hastings, Dewsbury, and North-West Manchester on the polling days at the recent by-elections.

Mr. HERBERT SAMUEL: My right hon. friend has not got the information, but he is making inquiries.

Mr. BOTTOMLEY: Will the right hon. Gentleman allow me to send him the information?

Lunacy through Religious Excitement.

Mr. BOTTOMLEY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he can state the number of persons at present confined in public lunatic asylums whose insanity is classified as due to religious excitement.

Mr. HERBERT SAMUEL: The Secretary of State is unable to say how many persons are at present confined in public lunatic asylums whose insanity is classified as due to religious excitement, but the yearly average number of patients admitted into county and borough asylums, registered hospitals, naval and military hospitals, state asylums, and licensed houses in England and Wales during the five years 1902 to 1906 whose insanity was stated to be due to this cause was 137 males and 197 females, making a total of 334.

Metropolitan Police Commission.

LORD R. CECIL (Marylebone, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when the Report of the Metropolitan Police Commission may be expected.

MR. HERBERT SAMUEL: The Commission inform the Secretary of State that their Report will probably be ready for submission to the King in about a month's time.

Minimum Punishments.

MR. HORNIMAN (Chelsea): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he has considered, or will consider, the question of fixing a minimum, as well as a maximum, penalty for indecent assault and kindred offences committed against children and young persons, in view of the fact that at the present time prisoners can be, and sometimes are, awarded no punishment, but simply bound over in relatively small sums to come up for judgment if called upon.

MR. HERBERT SAMUEL: To fix a minimum penalty for an offence would be contrary to the general policy of the law, and is in the opinion of the Home Secretary in most cases undesirable. I do not think offences of the kind referred to by my hon. friend could be made exceptions to the general rule. It is only in very rare cases and in exceptional circumstances that they are dealt with by merely binding over the defendant.

Coast Erosion in East Yorkshire.

MR. STANLEY WILSON (Yorkshire, E.R., Holderness): In the unfortunate absence of the President of the Board of Trade I beg to ask the Parliamentary Secretary of the Board of Trade whether he is aware that the state of affairs at Easington and Kilnsea, East Yorks, has become so serious that the question of defending this narrow neck of land from the inroads of the sea is no longer one for the local landowner; whether he is aware that at the present time at spring tides, the high road is flooded to a considerable depth, and that the village of Kilnsea and the Government lighthouse at the Spurn are isolated, and that if the sea makes a breach through the Humber bank these places will be completely isolated and probably eventually destroyed: and whether, under these circumstances, he can now see his way to defending the navigable channel of the Humber and the Spurn from these dangers.

THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. KEARLEY, Devonport): As I have already informed the hon. Member, the protection of the lowlands at Easington and Kilnsea is a duty primarily devolving upon the owners of the lands liable to be flooded, and the local Commissioners of Sewers, and the Board of Trade will be prepared to give careful consideration to any proposals they may make. I understand that by reason of the sea banks not having been repaired the sea flows over these low lying lands at spring tides, and the road to Kilnsea and the Spurn is at such times subject to flooding, but I am advised that the formation of a channel through the neck of land in question is somewhat improbable. It is proposed, however, to obtain a further report as to whether any additional steps are necessary for the protection of the Spurn. The Royal Commission on Coast Erosion, of which the hon. Member is a member, have, I understand, visited the locality and investigated the question, but have made no interim report or recommendation.

MR. STANLEY WILSON: Will the hon. Gentleman lay on the Table of the House a copy of the report laid before the Board of Trade by Sir William Matthew and Captain Fredericks?

MR. KEARLEY: I think it has already been before the Royal Commission. I will consider the point.

MR. STANLEY WILSON: When is this further inquiry to take place?

MR. KEARLEY: Immediately.

Shrewsbury Railway Accident.

MR. SMEATON: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether in view of the Report by Colonel Yorke on the cause of the fatal accident at Shrewsbury on the 14th October last, to the effect that Martin, the engine-driver, must have been overcome by sleep while the train was passing Crewe bank at a high speed, and therefore failed to see the signal and apply the brake in time, that Martin had been out of bed the whole of the previous night and most of the preceding four nights, with the exception of the 12th, he intends to take steps to prevent such overworking of engine-drivers, and what these steps are.

MR. CHIOZZA MONEY (Paddington N.): At the same time may I ask the Secretary to the Board of Trade whether his attention has been directed to the fact that the official Report upon the recent Shrewsbury railway disaster attributes the accident to the deceased driver falling asleep on the footplate through overwork and lack of proper and regular rest; if he can state what representations have been made to the railway company concerned; and what steps the Board of Trade purpose to take in order to protect the travelling public from similar disasters.

MR. KEARLEY: The point to which Colonel Yorke drew attention was the frequency with which Driver Martin had been put on night duty, and he suggested that it would seem to be a wise precaution to prevent the driver of an express train being out of bed for two nights in succession, or, at any rate, to limit the number of such nights in any one week. The Board of Trade are in communication with the London and North-Western Railway Company regarding this and the other recommendations contained in the Report, and I need hardly say that the matter will receive careful and persistent attention.

MR. SMEATON: Is the hon. Gentleman aware that men of experience have declared it is not uncommon for engine-drivers, owing to strain of working at nights, to dose and even fall asleep on their engines?

MR. KEARLEY: That is what Colonel Yorke reports.

MR. TOMKINSON (Crewe): Has the attention of the hon. Gentleman been called to a large meeting of engine-drivers and firemen at Crewe the week before last at which the idea of an engine-driver going to sleep on an engine, and particularly one travelling fifty or sixty miles an hour, was condemned as absolutely impossible, and at the same time was it not the decision of the men that the failure of the brakes was most probably the cause of the accident?

MR. KEARLEY: I have seen a report of the meeting.

MR. SMEATON: Was it not discovered that the brakes were in perfect order?

MR. KEARLEY: I think the whole ground is covered by the Report.

Imports of Dairy Produce from Holland.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS (Birmingham, Bordesley): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board if he can state, looking at the prevalence of foot and mouth disease in Holland, what steps, if any, are taken to prevent the produce of the infected farms of that country from being imported into England in the form of milk, butter, or cheese.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. JOHN BURNS, Battersea): I am advised that the available information does not show that there is any material risk of foot and mouth disease from the importation of dairy produce from Holland. Hence it does not seem to me necessary to take any special action in the matter at the present time, but I will not lose sight of it.

Imported Milk.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board, if he has seen the statement made at the meeting of the council of the British Dairy Farmers' Association to the effect that 578 cwts. (6,473 gallons) of fresh milk were imported into the United Kingdom during the nine weeks ending 1st February, compared with only 15 cwts. (168 gallons), during the corresponding period of last year; and, if the statement is correct, will he say what steps are being taken to examine the quality and condition of this imported milk?

MR. JOHN BURNS: According to figures which I have obtained from the Commissioners of Customs the quantity of fresh milk imported into the United Kingdom during the nine weeks ended 1st February, 1908, and during those ended 2nd February, 1907, was 499 cwts. and 94 cwts. respectively. Samples of imported milk, as of any other milk, may be taken under the Sale of Food and Drugs Acts with a view to their being analysed and dealt with under those Acts. Moreover, samples of imported milk are from time to time taken by the officers of Customs and sent to the Government Laboratory under the same Acts. If adulteration is discovered, the cases are reported to the Commissioners, who institute legal proceedings where this seems to them desirable. Further, I am arranging to have some samples of imported milk examined as to bacterial contamination and the presence of dirt.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS: When will the result of the examination be made public?

MR. JOHN BURNS: As soon as it is completed.

Mortality among Manufacturers of Temperance Drinks.

MR. BOTTOMLEY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he will grant a Return showing the relative mortality of persons engaged in the manufacture of ginger beer, lemonade, soda water, and other aërated drinks, as compared with those engaged in breweries and public-houses?

MR. JOHN BURNS: Perhaps I may be allowed to answer this Question. I am afraid I could not assent to the proposed Return. I have communicated with the Registrar-General with regard to it, and I find that his records do not show separately the mortality of persons engaged in the manufacture of aërated drinks. Consequently great labour and expense would be involved in getting the particulars necessary for arriving at this mortality. I may add that the number of persons engaged in the manufacture of aërated drinks is too small to afford a basis for trustworthy statistics. The total number of males between the ages of 25 and 65 who were so employed in England and Wales, according to the census of 1901, was only 5,587.

MR. BOTTOMLEY: Is it not a fact that the right hon. Gentleman has gone to the trouble and expense of giving the comparative mortality of people engaged in the brewery trade, and would it be more costly a proceeding to do the same in regard to people employed in the aërated water trade?

MR. JOHN BURNS: That is a perfectly natural and proper question to put, but the whole of the information to which the hon. Member refers has been for some time in the hands of the Registrar-General. It costs no money to secure, and very little trouble to compile.

MR. BOTTOMLEY: Is it not possible to supplement the Annual Report of the Registrar-General with information on this question of mortality?

MR. JOHN BURNS: I shall be pleased to communicate with the Registrar-General on the subject.

MR. CROOKS (Woolwich) asked whether a Return could be got out giving the number of lunatics in proportion to the two trades.

MR. GEORGE FABER (York): Can the right hon. Gentleman give a Return of the number of women engaged in the manufacture of aërated waters?

MR. JOHN BURNS: I will look into the matter. I shall be very pleased to satisfy hon. Members' curiosity.

Political Organisations in the Post Office.

MR. STANLEY WILSON: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether the public demonstration of the Civil Servants Socialist Society at Lambeth Baths, on Friday, 27th March, was held with his approval; whether he is aware that a postal servant took the chair, and whether he is aware that the objects of this society are to preach Socialism amongst Civil servants.

THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON, Tower Hamlets, Poplar): I have made inquiry about the meeting to which the hon. Member draws my attention. It was apparently a meeting which the public, and not merely members of the Service were invited to attend. I have pointed out to the chairman of the meeting, who was a Post Office servant, and to the secretary of the society in question, that when such societies hold or organise public meetings with the object of advancing certain political views among the public in general and not merely among members of the Service, there is an infringement of the Regulations on the part of the members of the Service responsible for such action.

MR. STANLEY WILSON: May I ask whether in view of the privileges which are allowed to Socialists in the Post Office, the right hon. Gentleman will now alter his decision, and either allow equal rights to all political organisations or do away with them entirely?

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON. I am sorry that I have been so singularly unsuccessful in convincing the hon. Member on more than one occasion that I have dealt in exactly the same way and on identically the same lines with all these various Post Office associations.

MR. STANLEY WILSON: Will the right hon. Gentleman appoint a Committee of this House to go into the whole question?

MR. T. F. RICHARDS (Wolverhampton, W.): A Committee of one hundred.

[No Answer was returned.]

Premium Bonds and the Lottery Acts.

MR. BOTTOMLEY: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether the Post Office authorities have recently intimated to various newspaper publishers that copies of their publications will not be permitted to be sent through the post if containing advertisements offering premium bonds for sale; and, if so, what is the ground for this new regulation.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: I have been advised that the premium bonds in question, the distinctive feature of which is the distribution of large prizes by ballot, are in the nature of a lottery, and that the transmission through the post of advertisements relating to such lotteries is contrary to the law. In accordance with this advice, I have communicated with the publishers of various newspapers with the object of preventing the publication of such advertisements.

MR. BOTTOMLEY inquired whether the attention of the right hon. Gentleman had been called by a responsible firm of solicitors to the fact that under a recent decision of the Courts it had been distinctly held that premium bonds did not come within the Lottery Acts.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON said he was advised that they did. He was determined to prohibit their being sent through the post so far as he could, and if anyone desired to bring an action against him, he would be glad to defend it.

MR. BOTTOMLEY: But has the attention of the right hon. Gentleman been called to this letter?

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: No, Sir, but I do not think it would alter my decision.

MR. BOTTOMLEY: In view of the fact that many responsible newspapers relying on the decision of the Courts have entered into long contracts for such advertisements, what indemnity does the right hon. Gentleman propose to give the owners of these newspapers?

MR. J. MACVEAGH: Give them a fourteen-years limit.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: Newspapers must take the responsibility. I am glad to say that in regard to some newspaper publishers, at all events, whose attention has been called to this matter they have at once fallen in with the view I have formed and put before them, and are not continuing the publication of these advertisements.

Postal Transmission of Lottery Circulars.

MR. BOTTOMLEY: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether it is the practice of his Department to permit the transmission through the post of circulars relating to lotteries when such lotteries are connected with religious objects.

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON: As I explained to the hon. Member on 10th March, the general practice of the Post Office is to stop packets observed to contain lottery circulars, but an exception is made in cases where the authorities responsible for the execution of the law do not regard the drawings as unpermissible.

Mr. BOTTOMLEY asked if the law allowed any distinction between religious and other objects.

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON: I cannot say that it does, but I am not able to move in the matter except under advice of the responsible authorities.

Mr. BOTTOMLEY asked who were the authorities responsible for the advice.

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON suggested that the hon. Member should give notice of any further Question.

Voice Training and Production.

Sir W. J. COLLINS: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education whether he will consider the desirability of initiating an inquiry, by Departmental Committee or otherwise, into the question of voice production and the various methods of voice training.

The PRESIDENT of the BOARD of EDUCATION (Mr. Runciman, Dewsbury): This question will receive my consideration, but I am not in a position to make any statement at present.

Mr. CROOKS: Will it apply to this House as well?

[No Answer was returned.]

British Coinage.

Mr. BOTTOMLEY: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education whether he is aware that silvered cardboard imitations of British coins are being used in Metropolitan council schools for the purpose of teaching the children their respective monetary values, and that on one side of such cardboard coins, and immediately under the head of the Sovereign, are the words German make; and whether the teachers have been instructed to explain to the scholars the exact meaning and significance of what might otherwise appear to them a perplexing inscription upon British coinage.

Mr. RUNCIMAN: The hon. Member has been good enough to send me specimens of the cardboard coins to which his Question relates. I do not think any child who is aware of the Merchandise Marks Acts is likely to be perplexed by the inscription referred to.

Mr. BOTTOMLEY: Is it part of the Code that children should be acquainted with the provisions of the Merchandise Marks Act?

[No Answer was returned.]

Barnsley Catholic School.

Mr. O'MALLEY (Galway, Connemara): On behalf of the hon. Member for South Kerry, I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education whether he is aware that an application has been made for the recognition of the Catholic school, Low Valley, Barnsley, as a public elementary school entitled to receive Government grants; whether he is aware that no opposition is made to this application by the lesser education authorities of Wombwell and of Darfield, in whose district Low Valley lies; and can he say whether this application has been granted.

Mr. RUNCIMAN: The Board have been informed that it is proposed to provide in this district a new public elementary school for 120 Catholic children, and instructions for the publication of the notices required by Section 8 of the Education Act, 1902, have been sent to the promoters. I have not received any intimation as to whether the notices have been issued, or as to the views of the minor local authorities. No decision can be given until the expiration of the statutory period of notice.

West Riding Council Schools.

Mr. CLOUGH (Yorkshire, W.R., Skipton): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education whether between the appointed day, 1st April, 1904, and the 31st March, 1907, the West Riding local education authority gave notice, under Section 8 (1) of the Education Act, 1902, of their intention to build seventy-six new council schools to provide accommodation for 22,520 children; and, if so, in how many cases, during 1904, 1905, and 1906, the Board of Education decided that the proposals were unreasonable, and that new schools were unnecessary.

Mr. RUNCIMAN: According to the Board's records, the West Riding County Council, between the dates named, issued eighty-six notices under Section 8 (1) of the Act of 1902, ten of which were subsequently for various reasons withdrawn or held in abeyance. The remaining seventy-six related to the provision of accommodation for 22,546 children. No decisions to the effect that the proposals were unreasonable or that the schools were unnecessary were given during the years specified.

Selby Schools.

Mr. CLOUGH: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education whether he is aware that the accommodation of school places in the Wesleyan, Abbey Church, and St. Mary's Roman Catholic Schools, Selby, are 582, 1,023, and 234 respectively, or a total of 1,839, and that the average attendance during 1907 was 439, 673, and 200 respectively, or a total of 1,312; whether this excess of 527 school places is the outcome of denominational proselytising zeal or caused by decaying industries; whether the local education authority is in any way responsible for this excess of accommodation; and whether the Board can suggest any means by which this unnecessary accommodation may be dispensed with, in view of the extra burden thus thrown upon the ratepayers.

Mr. RUNCIMAN: The Answer to the first paragraph is in the affirmative. I have no information as to the second. The local education authority is not in any way responsible for this excess of accommodation. The obligation of the local education authority to maintain existing schools which are not necessary for the school supply of the district can only be removed by legislation.

Mr. CLOUGH: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education whether he is aware that the buildings provided for the Wesleyan, Abbey Church, and St. Mary's Roman Catholic Schools, Selby, are of an unsatisfactory character; and whether he will instruct one of His Majesty's Inspectors of schools to report fully on these premises.

Mr. RUNCIMAN: There has been some criticism of the premises of the Wesleyan School, but I am not aware of any objections to the buildings of the two other schools referred to. His Majesty's Inspector will be asked to report on the premises when next he visits the school.

Mr. CLOUGH: Do I understand that the Inspector will confine his attention to the Wesleyan School?

Mr. RUNCIMAN: No, Sir. So far as his ordinary duties are concerned he will, of course, inspect the other schools as well. But objections have only been received in respect of the Wesleyan School.

Adwick-le-Street, Doncaster, Schools.

Mr. CLOUGH: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education whether he is aware that the Brodsworth Colliery Company have sunk a pit at Woodlands, Adwick-le-Street, Doncaster, where school places are non-existent; whether the West Riding local education authority have given notice to provide a school for 960 children; and, if so, whether the board have given consent to this proposal; and whether the Board can suggest a cheap method by which the 527 excess school places can be transported from Selby to Woodlands in order to relieve the burden that is about to be thrown upon the ratepayers.

Mr. RUNCIMAN: The local education authority gave public notice of their intention to provide a new school for 600, which was subsequently increased to 960, children. The provision of 600 places has been sanctioned by the Board, the statutory period of notice in respect of the remaining 360 has not yet expired and no decision has therefore been given. The Answer to the last part of the Question is in the negative.

Heighington Fen School Attendance Prosecution.

Mr. LUPTON: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education if he is aware that William

Mitchell, farmer, of Heighington Fen, near Lincoln, has been repeatedly prosecuted on account of the non-attendance of two of his sons at the council school, over two miles distant, and that in eighteen months the fines have aggregated over £20; if it is permissible to force a parent, by repeated penalties, to send his boy to a school which he considers unsuitable; and if he will take steps to prevent the continuance of this kind of treatment.

MR. RUNCIMAN: The law requires that parents shall cause their children to attend school unless there be reasonable excuse for their non-attendance. It rests with the magistrates to determine what is a reasonable excuse. I am not prepared to initiate legislation conferring on the parent the right of deciding whether the education provided at a particular school is or is not suitable to his children. This would be, in practice, equivalent to the abolition of compulsory school attendance.

MR. LUPTON: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the magistrates in deciding this case expressed sympathy with the defendant and were of opinion that his children were being well educated at home, but by reason of the peculiar by-laws which differ from the general Act they felt it necessary, against their own judgment, to inflict a fine.

MR. RUNCIMAN: That has not been brought to my attention. Of course no local magistrate can be allowed to abrogate the general law.

Medical Inspection in Elementary Schools.

MR. PIKE PEASE (Darlington): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education if he will lay upon the Table an authorised copy of his recent statement as to the cost of medical inspection in elementary schools.

MR. RUNCIMAN: I think the only point of public interest in the statement to which the hon. Member refers was to the effect that, at a time when the amalgamation of the existing grants is to be undertaken, the Government could not propose a special grant for medical inspection or any increase in Exchequer aid towards the expenses of Local Education Authorities under the Elementary Education Acts in anticipation of the additional sum to be provided in connection with the Education Bill now before Parliament.

Walsall School Dispute.

MR. T. F. RICHARDS: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education, whether his attention has been called to the case of a young man named Jellyman, nineteen years of age, and attending Queen Mary's Grammar School, Walsall, and who it is alleged has been guilty of smoking a cigarette in the precincts of the Walsall Railway station; whether he is aware that the head master offered as a punishment for the affair either a flogging before the whole school or his immediate resignation; and whether he can take such action as will modify such punishment under the circumstances.

MR. RUNCIMAN: From unofficial information which I have received I gather that the Governors of the School investigated the case referred to and decided unanimously to confirm the action of the head master. I further understand that the matter has been placed by the friends of the young man in the hands of lawyers, and I do not therefore propose to initiate any official inquiry into the circumstances of the case.

MR. T. F. RICHARDS: It is not the case that the friends have placed the matter in the hands of solicitors; therefore I ask for an Answer to my Question.

MR. RUNCIMAN: I am afraid that the information I have clashes with that of my hon. friend.

MR. T. F. RICHARDS: My informant is the father, and therefore the statement cannot be denied.

MR. RUNCIMAN: If the hon. Member cares to send further information I will consider it.

MR. LUPTON: Is it a common practice in this school publicly to flog young men of eighteen?

[No Answer was returned.]

Kirkburton Grammar School.

MR. CLOUGH: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education whether the endowment of the foundation known as the Kirkburton Grammar School was undenominational in origin; whether, since the Act of 1902 came into operation, the funds have accumulated by £93 per annum; whether there is now a balance of £400 in the bank; whether these endowments can be used in furtherance of education higher than elementary; and whether he will order an inquiry into the origin and present administration of the educational endowments at Kirkburton.

MR. RUNCIMAN: Instructions have been given for the holding of a local public inquiry, the scope of which will include the application of the endowment as well as questions arising in connection with Section 8 of the Education Act, 1902. Pending the report of the inquiry, it would be premature to express any opinion as to the future application of the funds or as to the character of the endowment. The Board have no information as to whether the income is accumulating or as to the balance in hand.

University of London.

*SIR W. J. COLLINS: I beg to ask the Prime Minister whether he is aware of the inadequate accommodation at present provided by Government for the University of London at South Kensington; and whether additional accommodation can be placed at the disposal of the University proportionate to the increased duties which have been entrusted to the University by statute.

MR. CHARLES HOBHOUSE: My right hon. friend has asked me to answer this Question. In view of the liberal provision made for the University in the years 1899–1901, I cannot hold out any hope that an extension of the existing accommodation can be provided at the public expense.

*SIR W. J. COLLINS: Will the right hon. Gentleman be willing to receive from the University further representations on the subject?

MR. CHARLES HOBHOUSE: Certainly.

*SIR PHILIP MAGNUS (London University) asked whether the hon. Gentleman was aware that the University was at present housed in only part of the building known as the Imperial Institute, and whether he would consider the advisability of placing the whole of it at the disposal of the University.

MR. CHARLES HOBHOUSE said that he could hardly be expected to answer that Question off-hand, but he might state that the accommodation now provided was very much larger than that which the University had in Burlington-gardens.

*SIR W. J. COLLINS: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the University was reconstituted by Act of Parliament which abrogated its charter, and that since then its work has greatly extended?

MR. CHARLES HOBHOUSE: Yes, Sir; I am aware of that, but I am also aware of the fact that a considerably increased money provision was made for it when it was transferred from Burlington-gardens to the present site.

*SIR W. J. COLLINS: Before the reconstitution.

The Public Trustee.

MR. BOTTOMLEY: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he can state what amount was expended in printing and advertising in connection with the establishment of the Department of the Public Trustee; what is the estimated total annual expense of such department; and what fees were received during the three months ending 30th March last.

MR. CHARLES HOBHOUSE: I am informed that £110 has been spent on printing (including paper) in connection with the establishment of the Department of the Public Trustee. No expenditure on account of advertising has been incurred. The total annual estimated expenditure as shown in the published estimates, Class III., Vote 5, for salaries, wages, and incidental expenses, is £6,500, and in addition sums of £810 and £500 respectively are estimated to fall on other Votes in respect of office accommodation and stationery. The estimated receipts in respect of fees are for the first year to 31st March, 1909, £4,000. The fees estimated to be received up to 30th March, 1908, were £400; the fees actually received amounted to £532.

MR. BOTTOMLEY: In view of the heavy loss on the working of the Department, will the hon. Gentleman reconsider the question of whether he ought to keep the Department open?

MR. CHARLES HOBHOUSE: Certainly not.

Irish Intermediate Education Board Rules.

MR. O'MALLEY (Galway, Connemara): On behalf of the hon. Member for South Kerry. I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether any opportunity will be afforded of discussing any objectionable points which may be contained in the new rules of the Irish Intermediate Board; and whether the Board will supply the Joint Committee of the Heads of Secondary Schools with copies of the new rules as soon as they are ready to be laid upon the Table of the House.

THE VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE FOR IRELAND (Mr. T. W. RUSSELL, Tyrone, S.): Perhaps in the absence of my right hon. friend the Chief Secretary through indisposition I may answer the Questions addressed to him. The Intermediate Education Act provides the method by which the rules made by the Board and approved by the Lord Lieutenant may be reviewed, that is to say, the rules are not to become operative until they have lain before Parliament for forty days without being disallowed. The suggestion that draft rules should be promulgated for discussion by heads of schools before being adopted is, my right hon. friend is advised, quite impracticable. Upon a former occasion when the Board distributed rules which were afterwards disallowed by this House, much inconvenience arose by reason of the fact that it was found impossible to recall all the copies issued, with the result that some of the schools prepared their students upon the disallowed rules. It is understood that the Board are always ready to receive and consider suggestions which may be made to them by any body or person interested, before submitting rules for the approval of the Lord-Lieutenant.

MR. O'MALLEY: On behalf of the hon. Member for South Kerry, I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state if the Intermediate Board intend to make the rules stereotyped for ten years; and when the new rules will be published.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: I am informed that the Intermediate Board have not yet come to a conclusion upon the subject of the Question, and consequently cannot say when new rules will be published.

Irish Secondary School Rules.

MR. O'MALLEY: On behalf of the hon. Member for South Kerry, I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the Joint Committee of the Heads of the Irish Secondary Schools has on more than one occasion requested the Intermediate Board to appoint a Committee of the Board with a view to the holding of a conference concerning the amending of various rules; whether he is aware that this request has been refused; and can he state the reason for this refusal.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: The Intermediate Board do not consider that a conference such as is suggested in the Question would be a satisfactory method of dealing with the matter. The Board have informed the Joint Committee that it would be more satisfactory that their views should be submitted in the form of a memorial, as on previous occasions, so that the various points may be fully and accurately stated for consideration by the Board.

Kenmare Fair Rent Applications.

MR. O'MALLEY: On behalf of the hon. Member for South Kerry, I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state the number of applications to fix fair rents received by the Irish Land Commission from the rural district of Kenmare, county Kerry, during the nine months ended 31st December, 1907, and the three months ended 31st March, 1908, respectively; and, having regard to the fact that the latest sitting of the Sub-Land Commission at Kenmare was on the 3rd October, 1907, at which only applications lodged before the 1st April, 1907, were dealt with, can he state the earliest date of the holding of a further sitting of the Sub-Land Commission at Kenmare.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: The number of applications received from the Kenmare district during the nine months ending 31st December, 1907, was twenty-seven, and the number received during the three months ending 31st March, 1908, was twenty-eight. The Land Commission will appoint a further sitting as soon as possible having regard to the claims of other districts, but cannot at present fix a date.

Irish Royal College of Surgeons.

SIR W. J. COLLINS: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has considered a memorial from the Royal College of Surgeons of Ireland praying that that body may become a constituent college in the new University to be established in Dublin; and whether he will be prepared to advise the inclusion of that college within the University.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: It is not intended to make the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland a constituent college of the proposed new University in Dublin.

SIR W. J. COLLINS: Will the Chief Secretary be prepared to consider any further representations that may be made by the Royal College of Surgeons?

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: Yes, Sir; I am quite sure my right hon. friend will be.

Royal Irish Constabulary.

MR. WALTER LONG (Dublin, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland what was the authorised strength of the Royal Irish Constabulary on the 1st December, 1905, and 1st March, 1908, respectively.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: The authorised strength of the force on 1st December, 1905, was 9,436, but on the following day authority was given to increase the force by fifty men. Since then, the number has been further increased by 414 men, making the total 9,900, at which figure it stood on 1st March, 1908.

Irish Resident Magistrates.

MR. WALTER LONG: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland what has been the number of vacancies in the office of resident magistrate in Ireland since 1st January, 1906; and whether the vacancies have all been filled.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: Since 1st January, 1906, four vacancies have occurred in the office of resident magistrate. Three new appointments have been made in respect of these vacancies, and one resident magistrate's station has been abolished.

Staff of the Estates Commission.

MR. WALTER LONG: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland what additional appointments were made to the staff of the Estates Commission consequent on the passing of the Evicted Tenants Act of 1907, and what is the cost of such additional establishment.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: No additional appointments to the staff of the Estates Commissioners have been made consequent upon the passing of the Evicted Tenants Act, 1907, but the services have been retained of the fourteen temporary inspectors who were appointed in April, 1907, as part of the general staff engaged on the purchase and re-sale of land, and in connection with the restoration of evicted tenants. These temporary inspectors are paid £800 per annum each, inclusive of subsistence allowance. A temporary clerical staff of ten persons engaged upon evicted tenants inquiry work has also been retained as part of the general indoor staff, at a total approximate cost of £600 per annum. The Estates Commissioners inform me that it is impossible to say what portion of the staff is engaged exclusively on the restoration of evicted tenants. They think it probable that if the Evicted Tenants Act had not been passed the whole of the present staff would have been required in connection with their purchase proceedings and with the restoration of evicted tenants under the voluntary provisions of the Act of 1903. It is, in fact, under these voluntary provisions that the reinstatement of evicted tenants is for the most part being effected.

Inspectorship of Irish Reformatories.

MR. WALTER LONG: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that it was proposed by the late Government, so soon as the opportunity presented itself, to amalgamate the Inspectorship of Reformatory and Industrial Schools with one of the Commissionerships of the Prisons Board; whether the opportunity has yet arisen; if so, what steps have been taken for carrying out the proposed arrangement; and what is the resultant saving to the Exchequer.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: There is no official record of any proposal by the late Government to amalgamate the offices named in the Question. But when the Medical Commissionership of the Prisons Board became vacant on 1st September, 1906, His Majesty's present Government decided to fill the vacancy by appointing thereto the Inspector of Reformatory and Industrial Schools, the two offices to be held jointly. The saving to the Exchequer as the result of this arrangement amounts to £550 per annum.

Mr. Keaneny, J.P.

MR. LONSDALE (Armagh, Mid.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the remarks reported to have been made by Mr. J. Keaneny, a county councillor and justice of the peace, at a public meeting on Sunday, 19th April, at Tulsk, county Roscommon, advising the people, wherever there was a grazier or rancher, to make the place a little hell for him; and whether he intends to take any action in the matter.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: This matter has been referred to the Lord Chancellor, and is under his consideration.

Cattle-Drives in Ireland.

MR. LONSDALE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will state the number of cattle-drives reported to the police, or within their cognisance, during the months of January, February, March, and April, respectively.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: The number of cattle-drives reported in January was 35; in February, 31; in March, 57; and in April, to date, 47.

Tanderagee Evicted Tenant.

MR. LONSDALE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Estates Commissioners will give further consideration to the case of Samuel Rainey, an evicted tenant, of Ballymore, Tanderagee, county Armagh, with a view to placing him in possession of a holding in lieu of that from which he was evicted.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: The Estates Commissioners have fully considered this case, and see no reason to alter the decision of which my right hon. friend informed the hon. Member on 17th July last.

MR. LONSDALE: Is the hon. Gentleman aware that two inspectors have reported that this is a case for reinstatement?

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: I have no knowledge as to that.

Land Purchase Annuities.

MR. LONSDALE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will state the number of cases in which legal proceedings have had to be instituted by the Land Commission during the last six months to recover from tenant purchasers annuities due under the Irish Land Act of 1903.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: The number of cases in which the Land Commission directed proceedings to be taken last month for the recovery of land purchase annuities due on 1st December last was 1,074. Payment has since been made in 549 of these cases, leaving only 525 now in arrear out of a total of 38,963 payers of annuities.

Charlestown Petty Sessions—Charge of Unlawful Assembly.

MR. LONSDALE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the fact that the magistrates, sitting at Charlestown Petty Sessions on the 10th April, by a majority refused informations in the case of six men charged with unlawful assembly on the 18th March, when it was alleged that they formed part of a crowd who took letters containing processes of ejectment for rent from the rural postman; whether two resident magistrates dissented from the decision of the majority, and one of them stated that he had never heard a clearer primâ facie case put forward by the prosecution; and whether he proposes to take further steps to place these men upon trial for the offences alleged against them.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: The facts are substantially as stated by the hon. Member. The question of taking further proceedings has been fully considered by my right hon. friend the Attorney-General for Ireland, who has decided that having regard to the decision of the majority of the bench, the case is not one in which he would be justified in sending up a Bill to the grand jury.

Forestry in Ireland.

MR. LONSDALE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether it is intended to take any action to give effect to the recommendations of the Departmental Committee on Forestry in Ireland.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: The Report of the Departmental Committee on Irish Forestry, which has only recently been issued, is under consideration, but there has not yet been time to arrive at a decision upon the recommendations of the Committee. The importance of dealing with the matter is fully recognised, and the Government will come to a decision upon it as soon as may be possible, having regard to the financial and other considerations involved.

Irish Department of Agriculture—Salary of Secretary.

MR. WALTER LONG: I beg to ask the Vice-President of the Department of Agriculture (Ireland) whether it was upon his recommendation that the salary of the secretary of the Department has been increased from £1,300 to £1,500 per annum, and what are the reasons for the increase.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: The Answer to the first part of the Question is in the affirmative. The salary was increased by the sum stated in order to make it more nearly commensurate with the exceedingly onerous responsibilities of the office, which are not less than those of the permanent heads of other great Departments of State on which the official constitution of the Department has been modelled and in which a higher scale of salary obtains.

Orders in Council.

*MR. BELLAIRS: I beg to ask the Prime Minister, with reference to the Answer of the Prime Minister on 14th March, 1907, stating that he proposed to confer with the Lord President of the Council with reference to the enforcement of the rule that all Orders in Council should be published in the London *Gazette*, whether he can now state what action has been taken, and if the rule will be invariably enforced in the future; and whether he is aware that the Secretary of the Privy Council states that Members of Parliament are not entitled to copies of Orders in Council, when applying on a matter in which they are interested.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. ASQUITH, Fife, E.): All Orders in Council, where required by Statute, are published in the London *Gazette*. Some misconception must, I think, exist as regards the statement attributed to the Clerk of the Privy Council, as that officer states that he has not expressed such an opinion.

*MR. BELLAIRS: As the statement was made by letter in answer to an application by me for a copy of an Order in Council, will the right hon. Gentleman communicate with the Clerk to the Council on the matter?

MR. ASQUITH: Yes.

Trade Combinations in Great Britain.

SIR GILBERT PARKER (Gravesend): I beg to ask the Prime Minister whether he is aware of the existence in Great Britain of trusts, rings, cartels, and other combinations having for their object the monopolisation of trades and markets, by regulating the output or by keeping up prices and stifling competition; and, seeing that such combinations are in restraint of trade, and are, therefore, inconsistent with the present free-trade policy of this country, whether he will take steps to restrain the increasing monopolistic operations of foreign trusts in the United Kingdom; and whether the Government will grant a Royal Commission or a Select Committee to inquire into the existence of railway conferences, shipping rings, coal rings, industrial combinations of the iron and steel trades, such as the Railmakers Syndicate and other organisations like the Imperial Tobacco Trust, the Meat Trust, and the German Electrical Manufacturers Trust.

Mr. ASQUITH: I am aware of the existence of trade combinations of the kind referred to in the United Kingdom, and I agree that in some cases the effects of these may be prejudicial to the public interest. But the operations of such trusts are necessarily more circumscribed and less mischievous here than in other countries in which they are fostered by a general customs tariff, and I doubt whether there would at the present time be any advantage in such an inquiry as the hon. Member suggests.

The Budget.

Mr. McCRAE asked the Prime Minister if, having regard to the near approach of the Whitsunday Term, and in view of the inconvenience caused in Scotland by delay, the right hon. Gentleman could now say when the Budget would be introduced.

Mr. ASQUITH: I hope on Thursday, 7th May.

NEW MEMBERS SWORN.

William Joynson-Hicks, esquire, for Borough of Manchester (North-West Division).

Captain the hon. Arthur Cecil Murray, County of Kincardine.

PUBLIC PETITIONS COMMITTEE.

Second Report brought up, and read; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

NEW BILL.

WHALING STATIONS.

Mr. CATHCART WASON (Orkney and Shetland), in asking leave to introduce a Bill to provide for the closing of existing whaling stations during the summer herring fishing and to prohibit whaling stations being established in the future on any part of the shores of Great Britain and Ireland, said the case which he had the honour to present to the consideration of the Government was of the utmost importance to the great herring fishing of Scotland, of which Shetland, at certain seasons, was the principal ground. In 1903 things were going well with them. Good fishings and consequent increased commercial prosperity had put life into the people. In the summer of that year two foreign whaling companies, without leave or licence from any public authority, invaded the most beautiful Voe in Shetland and in a short time rendered its waters unfit for life. Herring stations had to be abandoned, and fishermen he afterwards met at Pittenweem assured him that cuts on their hands would not heal, trifling sores became ulcers, owing to the polluted waters. He visited the Voe as soon as possible, and the scene could only be described by a Zola or an Upton Sinclair. Not only that, but for miles down the Voe the mussel beds were destroyed. At a public meeting he denounced the beastly business, but landlordism, capital, and cunning were too strong, and no public feeling was aroused. The following year Mr. Graham Murray appointed a Commission to visit Shetland, and the result was presented to the House in the form of a Bill, but outside influence being brought to bear on the Government, no serious attempt was made to pass it, and on the west coast of Shetland the herring fishing had gone from bad to worse, and the industry was in despair. Naturally enough, when people saw ruin staring them in the face they must find someone on whom they might ventilate their indignation, and although he had done everything he possibly could to impress both the present Government and the late Government with the gravity of the situation, he was bitterly blamed by the local Tory Press for not having successfully compelled either of the Governments to adopt his views. His hon. friend the Secretary for Scotland also came in for a considerable share of abuse, and with equal justice he was denounced most vigorously for the carelessness and apathy of his predecessors, who, knowing and admitting the gravity of the situation, did nothing. His hon. friend the Member for South

Tyrone told the House the other day that he proposed introducing a Bill to legalise whaling stations in Ireland, and in view of the disastrous results that had followed in the west coast of Shetland, he wanted to be told what they knew. They knew as facts that since this inhuman work started, the herring fishing on the west coast of Shetland had gone from bad to worse. They knew that the Norwegian fishermen drove the whale killers from their shores, and that the Norwegian fishing had not yet recovered. They knew that the operations polluted the waters for miles round, and destroyed the mussel beds. A petition had been presented to the Secretary for Scotland from the Shetland Herring and White Fishing Association, praying that the Government would, without delay, appoint a Commission of Inquiry to examine and report on the subject. He and other Members representing the fishing industry strongly supported that petition, and he could not imagine any reasonable ground on which it could be refused, and they were presenting a memorial to the Secretary for Scotland praying that he would accede to the request. Many hon. Members from Ireland, departing from their usual custom of not associating themselves with them, had supported the principle of this Bill, and he was grateful for the support. And until the Commission which it was hoped the Secretary for Scotland would at once appoint made its report, he trusted that the Irish Government would stay its hand and refrain from granting any permits for the establishment of these stations. All the circumstances of the case justified the Government in accepting the principle of this Bill, that meantime no further stations would be permitted on the British or Irish coasts, and that the Secretary for Scotland should take power to prohibit the working of such stations as were now erected, during certain seasons of the year.

Question—"That leave be given to introduce a Bill to provide for the closing of existing whaling stations during the summer herring fishing, and to prohibit whaling stations being established in the future on any part of the shores of Great Britain and Ireland,"—put and agreed to.

Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Cathcart Wason, Mr. Gwynn, Mr. Leicester Harmsworth, Dr. Ambrose, Mr. Weir, Mr. O'Malley, Mr. Morton, Mr. Hugh Law, Mr. John Sutherland, and Mr. Ainsworth.

WHALING STATIONS BILL

"To provide for the closing of existing whaling stations during the summer herring fishing and to prohibit whaling stations being established in the future on any part of the shores of Great Britain and Ireland," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Wednesday, 13th May, and to be printed. [Bill 205].

LICENSING BILL.

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment to Question [28th April], "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Which Amendment was,

> "To leave out from the word 'That,' to the end of the Question, in order to add the words, 'this House declines to proceed further with a measure which, while failing to promote the cause of temperance, violates the principles of equity'"—(*Mr. Cave*)—instead thereof.

Question again proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

MR. WALTER LONG (Dublin, S.): Before I approach the question which we have under discussion a pleasanter and an easier duty falls to my lot owing to the fact that yesterday during the course of our proceedings no Member sitting on this Bench had the opportunity to offer to the Prime Minister, on his first appearance in what I may call perhaps our practical, ordinary, everyday life here, our warm congratulations upon his accession to the most distinguished office in the State, and our conviction that he will fill it with credit to himself and with honour to the great country over whose destinies he is now called upon to preside. I am also glad and ready to bear testimony to the very admirable speech, if my hon. and learned friend will permit me to praise him and his words, delivered yesterday by the Member for the Kingston Division. I do not hesitate to say that as far as I am entitled to voice any of the opinions of the Opposition, and as far as I desire to see the case for the Opposition put before the House, everything that I could desire or ask for was done yesterday by my hon. and learned friend, and I believe, however strongly Members opposite may have differed from him either in his arguments or in his conclusions, nobody will deny that he put his case in very strong and clear terms, and put it to the House in a manner which made even his strongest opponents unable to differ from him with any feeling of bitterness. For my part, I wish with all my heart that the debate could end there, especially because it would relieve me of the duty which devolves on me of taking part in it, but also because it is very difficult for anybody who does not possess my hon. and learned friend's acute intellect and long training in judicial work to speak upon this question without running the risk of possibly spoiling the excellence of some of the points which he put so clearly. But I suppose it would be regarded as contrary to our Party system if we were to introduce so simple a procedure as a speech on each side and then a division, and I have no doubt that, while the Government of the day would accept such an innovation with delight, whenever that Government became an Opposition their views would be diametrically changed as to the advantages of the proposition. The Prime Minister, in his speech yesterday at the opening of our proceedings, called upon us on this side to formulate our case. He referred to the Act of 1904 for which we were responsible, and references were also made to it by succeeding speakers, including the Under-Secretary for the Home Office, and it was more than once asked "How can you justify the ground you have taken up having regard to the fact that you were responsible for and passed the Act of 1904?" I venture to say that there is to be found in the Act of 1904 no precedent whatever for the legislation which we are now called upon to consider. Further, I venture to say that this Bill proceeds upon lines exactly opposite to those which were pursued by the promoters of the Act of 1904. What was the main object of that measure? It was to provide an easy, and above all, an equitable machinery by which unnecessary and superfluous licences could be got rid of. That Bill when it was introduced brought about with a section of the licence-holders a distinct bargain, value being given for value. The Under-Secretary claimed as evidence of the force of the law that previous to the passing of the Act of 1904, and quite recently, there had been 700 or 800 licences suppressed without compensation. Nobody denies that fact; nobody on this side of the House denies that right to the exercise of their powers in what we regard as an arbitrary way by certain limited benches, which brought this question to the fore. And why was it that the use of these powers was limited to certain benches? It was because, in the case of the great majority of the magistrates of the country, their sense of justice revolted against the idea of exercising a power which, however long it might have existed, had certainly lain dormant for a long time, in order to take away without compensation the living of respectable people who had regarded their property as one which would be continuous if they took proper care of it and behaved themselves properly. That bargain was made, and what did those ante-1869 licence-holders surrender? They surrendered a right which nobody now disputed. It was not disputed that the ante-1869 licence-holders had a right different from those who followed. They surrendered it, and in return for what? In return for the right to full compensation for the business and property they were surrendering, that compensation to be provided out of a levy to which they were themselves to contribute. To claim the Act of 1904 as a precedent for this legislation is, I venture to say, a claim which cannot be sustained by anybody who remembers what took place when that Bill was in Parliament, or who realise what was the effect of that Act upon our licensing laws. It was claimed by the Under-Secretary last night that one of the great reforms the Government were effecting was one dealing with the new licences. That was one of the reforms contained in the Act of 1904, for which we were responsible. The fact that that Act was claimed as a measure of temperance reform is undoubtedly true, but it was only based upon this ground, that where it is proved that unnecessary licences exist, there it is desirable to enable their removal to be effected without arousing bitter controversy and without doing a great injustice, and these results were arrived at by the passing of that Bill. Those results were effected by the Act of

1904. Can anybody say that similar results will follow from the Bill we are now considering? We heard last night a speech from the Under-Secretary for the Home Office which did not want in ability. He certainly had official sources of information at his command, but there was not one statement controverting the case advanced by my hon. and learned friend the Member for Kingston, who showed that if this Bill passed in its present form or practically in any form and if its operation were to extend to the the country generally the gravest injustice would be inflicted upon a large number of innocent people. The only way in which the Government and their supporters have met that case is by falling back upon the fact, which was known to everybody and has no relation to this question of injustice, that at one period in the history of the licensing trade advantage was taken of what was believed to be a time of great prosperity and that some businesses were sold at greatly inflated prices. Nobody denies that at all. But the great brewers and the owners of these businesses are not the only people who have suffered by what has happened, and they are not the only people who ought to be considered. And what is more; surely it is bad enough that people should have suffered by bad finance and operations of that nature. In some cases these businesses have recovered. But there are many cases, as the hon. Member for Kidderminster stated last night, where the publichouses belong to small local brewers. There are no harder cases to be found than those. In a part of Wiltshire there are a large number of public-houses which are attached to small breweries and are conducted by the men who own both. How are you going to deal with those cases? The only answer which has been given to that question is that they are trading on the results of the folly and bad finance of these people, or that they are making calculations in regard to the future upon some false basis. Of course, it is quite natural for those who are responsible for this measure, and who I hope believe in it, to wish to make the best case they can, but there has not been one statement made on the Government side which disposes of the facts and figures brought before the House by my hon. and learned friend. Those facts and figures are the results not of fancy calculations of laymen, not of persons interested in making out the best possible case, but of the best experts in the land, men who are intimately acquainted with all the pitfalls and difficulties of such estimates. I repeat that neither in its composition nor in its operation can the Act of 1904 be cited as a precedent for the Bill we are now considering. The Prime Minister has asked us two questions, and I will endeavour plainly and briefly to answer them. The right hon. Gentleman must realise what is sometimes not realised by hon. Gentlemen below the gangway—I do not blame them for it—that we are in a difficult position in the absence of the Leader of the Opposition, who was himself responsible for the Act of 1904, and who is the only man entitled to speak with a single voice on behalf of his Party. But I believe I shall not be misstating the position of my right hon. friend, although I cannot hope to express it in his terms, in answering those two questions. The first question was, Do you admit and approve of a time-limit? I confess I was rather surprised that the Prime Minister asked that question, and for this reason. That question was frequently raised by hon. Gentlemen on his side of the House during the debates on the Act of 1904, but it was raised in different circumstances and in a different form. My right hon. friend who was then Prime Minister stated distinctly, and I believe it is his opinion now, that a time limit is absolutely incompatible with a concurrent levy for insurance. That is our view now. The Act of 1904 involved a serious compact between Parliament and those with whom we were then dealing, and it gave most clearly power to dispose of licences on condition that fair and reasonable compensation was paid. The hon. Member for Appleby, who dealt with many of these questions in a very light-hearted fashion, talked about this insurance as a thing which could be easily done. I wonder on what authority he spoke! I heard him afterwards talking about the way in which beer was brewed, and when challenged with making an absurd statement he immediately confessed he knew nothing about it. I do not know whether he made the statement about insurance on the same foundation; but this I do know, that no one has yet produced a practical scheme of insurance which would enable the owners of a property like this to provide against the time limit if concurrently they had to provide the money necessary for their own insurance. That is a complete answer to the question of a time-limit. Now the second question which the Prime Minister asked us was: Are you in favour of the recovery of the monopoly value by the State? The Prime Minister said he he was entitled to an answer, and I think he is. I regard it very much from the point of view of the injury you would do to the owner of a particular class of property. I deny altogether that this question has any connection, however remote, with the question of temperance, and I believe that those who have studied this question longest hold the same view. If you take the grave step of transferring these licences from the individual to the State, a diminished consumption of alcoholic liquor is not likely to be the result. I am not sure that the Under-Secretary, in the inner recesses of his mind, does not hold the same view. He himself hardly became enthusiastic last night until he reached that part of his speech in which he told the House that a vast revenue would come to the State from this change. Therefore I deny that this question of the recovery of the monopoly to the State is a temperance question. It is not a temperance measure, but a fiscal measure pure and simple. The Under-Secretary seemed to say that we had confused what is meant by the monopoly value. We are grateful to him for that, and for attempting to give us fuller information; but I can assure him that we quite understand that all the State desires to become possessed of is the licence value. But before the Government come forward with a proposal of that kind—if the State decides that it is right in the interests of public morality and of the general community that that should be done—they must be prepared to accompany it with an undertaking that a fair and reasonable price will be paid for that which is to be taken away. The Prime Minister has said that he thought owners of property were ill-advised to fight this Bill, and that they were incurring risks to themselves. I would remind the right hon. Gentleman that these statements as to the effect of this Bill upon the rights of property come not from us or from property owners, but from the leaders of the Socialist Party. The Prime Minister went on to say that he had settled all these points to his own and his Government's satisfaction, and that now all that was necessary was to give the trade time to turn round and make provision for themselves. The trade must turn round uncommonly quickly if they are to make provision for themselves in the time allowed by this Bill. The Prime Minister told us that all the owners of this vast property had long been aware of the fact that the ownership was attended by risks, and that the fact that they had made no provision showed them to be most imprudent in matters of finance. The hon. Member for Appleby whose language was not well chosen, talked of it as rotten finance.

***Mr. LEIF JONES** (Westmoreland, Appleby): What I said was that if they had not made provision it was rotten finance.

Mr. WALTER LONG: That is exactly what I said. I was only referring to the elegant language of the hon. Member. The hon. Member is not responsible for this Bill. The Government are. I am informed that not an inconsiderable number of licensed houses have been owned by Government Departments. I should like to ask the Prime Minister whether anyone of those Departments, whether under a Unionist or a Radical Administration, has ever made provision for the case that has arisen. We know that in most recent times they have not only not made provision by that prudent finance which the Prime Minister and the hon. Member for Appleby warmly extol, but that they have sold public-houses at the highest market price, and left it to somebody else to indulge in prudent finance to protect the new owners of the property which has been depreciated by this proposed legislation. I think that the owners of brewery property, large and small, may regard with complacency the charges of rotten finance when they find that the Government as owners of public-houses have made no provision of a similar kind themselves. The Prime Minister told us that he would welcome suggestions with regard to clubs. That is all very well, but the Prime Minister knows that this club question touches the people more closely than any other. To parade this Bill as an efficient measure of temperance reform because it deals with public-houses and not with clubs, and then to say to the Opposition, "We ask you what we are to do with clubs," is to act as a parent of this Bill in a very indifferent manner. The hon. Member for the Appleby Division made two statements which I venture directly to challenge. He made a statement about the personal honesty of all those who are opposing this Bill. That reminds me that I ought not, I suppose, to address the House, and shall come under his ban because I own £2,000 or £3,000 worth of shares in a brewery, and I suppose my position is vitiated by that fact.

*MR. LEIF JONES: My statement was that those from whom I have received protests were interested in the trade.

MR. WALTER LONG: If the hon. Member denies the accuracy of my recollection I at once withdraw the statement. But his statement was that he had been unable to meet anybody except those who are interested in the trade who were not in favour of the Bill.

*MR. LEIF JONES: What I intended to say and what I think I said was that the protests I had received were from persons interested, and I went on to mention letters which I had received.

MR. WALTER LONG: Of course I will accept his explanation at once. If I have misrepresented the hon. Gentleman, I at once withdraw. But he will not forget that in one of his perorations—I forget which—he made a magnificent statement. He said—

"Mr. Speaker, this is a case of good or evil."

When he made that statement I ceased to wonder why the temperance party made such little progress. I was at a loss to know which to wonder at most—the arrogance of the claim which he advanced for himself as the representative of good, or the insolence in describing us as the representatives of evil. I beg to say that the cause of temperance reform will not be advanced by charges of that kind flung across the floor of the House. We are entitled to claim that we are actuated by motives as honest, and convictions as strong, as are those of Gentlemen opposite. [Cheers.] It is all very well for hon. Gentlemen opposite to cheer those sentiments, but to allow your colleagues to describe us as evil against your good is a different thing. I bring no accusation of motives against hon. Gentlemen opposite. I believe that the strongest advocates of the temperance movement are the men who are the real authors of this Bill, because their action in the country has led to its introduction, and they have never concealed their view that they look upon the drink traffic as an immoral traffic. Their object is to get rid of the traffic altogether. I do not blame Gentlemen who hold those views if they wish to destroy it altogether; but, holding those views, I object when they say that they are pleading here only for a moderate Bill. They believe that they have no cause to be ashamed of those views, and, holding them, they ought to demand that all those connected with the traffic should be suppressed, and the scantiest justice meted out to them. I complain that some of the hon. Gentlemen opposite come here, assume for themselves all the virtues in the world, and attribute to us all the evils, and say that all the opposition to this Bill is confined to those interested in the trade. How any man who goes about, who travels by train or 'bus, or walks, can make that statement, amazes me. He must go about with his eyes shut. I am not going to talk about by-elections, because I do not think one thing alone affects by-elections; but anybody who reads the reports of these by-elections knows how this Licensing Bill has aroused a great feeling amongst men. It is not a fair charge to say that those only who are interested in the trade are opposed to it. We have wondered why the Government think it necessary to bring in this Bill. The Under-Secretary said last night—

"You will not deny that intemperance is a great evil."

No one on this side of the House denies that, and much is being done to make this nation sober. I agree that there is still room for amendment, but the Bill is far more likely to set back the hands of the clock. An hon. Gentleman said yesterday that he had never listened to a temperance debate in which Members did not say they agreed with temperance reform, but—there are always "buts." Is there not the biggest "but" to be found in this Bill? What is the "but"? You are seeking to advance temperance at the cost of fair dealing and justice. Is not that a fair justification for our opposition? We know that the Act of 1904 was working smoothly and well, and with increased rapidity. Though it might be necessary to make some amendment in it, I do not believe any radical alteration was necessary. It is claimed by the Government that the present Bill is better than the Act of 1904. Looking at the clauses, I cannot find that there is any certainty that any man who owns a public-house will get a penny more than under the Act of 1904, and I do not think his prospects are so sound as they were under the previous Act. If that falls to the ground, what becomes of the rest of the arguments which rest on the connection between the number of licensed houses in the country and temperance itself. It has been conceded by the Prime Minister that it is not held or claimed by the Government that this reduction of public-houses is in itself likely to result largely in temperance, but that it only contributes to that result. I think that is a fact that will be generally accepted. But I think you can carry it farther. The figures quoted by my hon. friend yesterday dealing with the number of licences in various counties and the number of convictions for drunkenness are very startling. But anyone who studies them carefully as I have done cannot but see that the relation between the number of houses and the number of convictions for drunkenness form very unreliable evidence in support of reduction as a means towards sobriety. I was amazed at the argument of the Under-Secretary for Home Affairs, based upon Home Office information, that these figures are not reliable because of the different methods among the police, who were more active in some places than in others. We are told that the Government lay down what the minimum reduction shall be, and they say that in proportion to the population per acre there shall be only a certain number of houses, and that this will contribute to temperance. I take the case of two villages I know myself, in one of which I live. The other is seven miles away. Both are under the same police force, and both are well policed by active and admirable men, who are changed from time to time, so that there may be no risk of collusion. These are the results. In one village you have a population of 459, you have two licensed houses, and there has been one conviction in five years for drunkenness. The reports from the police, who are very active, are thoroughly satisfactory. In the other village, where the class of people and the employment and general conditions are the same, the population is about 760. There are four licensed houses and one off-licence. There have been two convictions in ten years, and one in five years, and one of these persons did not belong to the place. What is going to be the operation of this Bill in such a case? How are you going to differentiate between the two villages? The number of convictions is the same; the sobriety of the villagers is the same; their general conduct is the same, and the police are the same. Are you going to reduce these licensed houses, and if so, what evidence is there that by their reduction you will do anything except to close a public-house which at present is well conducted, and which, from all we can tell, is desired by the people themselves? What advantage would there be in closing that public-house? It would be closed simply because hon. Members opposite said that whether it was necessary in the interests of the people or not it was to go, because it was a public-house. I come now to what I think is the most remarkable change under this Bill. This Government, this great strong Liberal Government, talking as they have done of trusting the people—what have they done to local government by this Bill? They have made the most startling change that has been made in our local government system for many a year. Ever since they came into office they have been doing their utmost to interfere with local government, first with regard to land, and now in a still more drastic and startling way with the local authorities in the counties. When we, in our 1904 Bill, gave an appeal against the local authority to the quarter sessions they denounced us for doing so, because they said the local authority would know the wants of the people better than quarter sessions. How have they followed their preaching by practice? They do not go to the quarter sessions. They appoint a Commission to sit in London, which, if the local authority say there is no change required, and that everything is satisfactory, come down and say, "You are to frame a scheme, whether you like it or not, which will result in so many houses being reduced. You can select the people who are to suffer under the scheme, but we order you to do this against your better opinion." Is that a democratic reform of local government? When this Government have done, if they live another year or two, I wonder what will be the result on our local governing bodies? They will have practically no power left. Two or three Commissions in London will do all the work of local government. A more extraordinary change than this has never been made, I think, in local government, nor one that is more improper. We have heard a great deal about clubs, and some of the Government's own supporters have plaintively implored the Government to do something more in regard to this matter. On this question I desire only to speak for myself. I admit that in the club papers that have reached me quite a startling list of clubs is given in which the performances seem to be of rather a peculiar character. I do not know why, but they are all put down as Radical democratic clubs. I daresay there may be others. I have not selected them, but the fact remains that in these papers they are so described.

SIR THOMAS WHITTAKER (Yorkshire, W.R., Spen Valley): The papers are circulated in Radical clubs, and therefore give information about the Radical clubs.

MR. WALTER LONG: Obviously. They would not advertise Conservative clubs as that would spoil their takings. I have some knowledge of working men's clubs myself, and I do not think this House ought to jump to the conclusion that the majority of such clubs are conducted on the lines we have heard described. The majority, I believe, are conducted by men as honourable, as fond of sobriety and good conduct as any man in this House or out of it. But the Government say, "We must reduce the number of licences by a fixed and wholesale quantity." Why? "Because," as the hon Gentleman the Under-Secretary for Home Affairs said yesterday, "we do not want to offer this extra temptation to drinking." Now whether a club is well or badly conducted has nothing to do with the argument of the Government, whose ground is the reduction of places where drink can be obtained. I hold that to bring in this Bill is to destroy a large portion of this trade, which proceeding, not only the trade, but thousands of other people regard as grossly unjust, and it will bring about the almost inevitable result of opening clubs which, however well-conducted, are not subject to any of the limitations imposed on public-houses. To introduce as a measure of temperance reform such a Bill is a sham and a farce. It is idle to ask us to frame clauses in regard to clubs. The Government are responsible for their own Bill, and they have no right to pretend that by police regulations they are really dealing with the temperance question. It has been said that we who are supposed to be for some reason the special defenders of the rights of property are unwise in allowing this class of property to be in any way associated with property such as freehold estates. We do not ourselves select the methods by which we are attacked. We have only to defend, and when we observe the easy steps by which Gentlemen opposite pass from the old paths of Liberalism into the paths of modern up-to-date Radicalism we are naturally apprehensive of suggestions of this kind, especially when we find how they are being used by some of the most thoughtful and capable of those who call themselves Socialists. Mr. Hyndman said—

> "One part of this Bill he did like, and that was the fourteen years time-limit, for the expropriation of brewers and publicans. If the expropriation of public-houses and breweries could be done in fourteen years, why not cotton mills, coal mines, etc.? He thought it was an excellent proposal, and was much obliged to Mr. Asquith for telling him that fourteen years was the limit for the expropriation of property."

Then there was the Member for Blackburn who said—

> "The Labour group in Parliament do not think that the Government produced this Bill under the belief that it is a Socialist Bill, but we do believe that in principle it is a Socialist Bill, tending to leave in the hands of the people and restore to the people that which they ought never to have parted with."

That is cheered. Then where does the blame arise for the part we took? We have heard exactly that language in this House—and not from Socialists—addressed to those who have been possessors of agricultural land. The very language used here has been used by every speaker who has taken part in any of the land debates in this House; therefore, are we unwise in expressing our profound regret that the Government have introduced in this Bill a principle which we believe to be the thin end of the wedge which others will drive in for them as time goes on? It is quite unnecessary for me to add to the list of cases which have been produced in this House. A most remarkable list of figures was given by Mr. Peat, a recognised authority and expert, who is perfectly impartial in this matter, He gave a selection of breweries which he said were stable concerns, and not of the class described by those who talk about "bad finance," and he showed what would be the loss on those undertakings if this Bill passed. My hon. and learned friend the Member for Kingston gave a series of individual cases, and, if I had the time, I could give others of women who have been left money on sound mortgages of property of this kind, which provides them now with their only means of livelihood. These investments were the results of savings left them by their husbands. The greater part if not the whole, of that will go; and I say, if this money is to be sacrificed, those people are not the people who took advantage of the inflated prices; they did not take advantage of the boom bait; they lent their money on the sound security of individual houses in different places. Without compensation at the end of the time-limit — fourteen years — it is impossible for them to provide against what they will lose. The Government say under this Bill that the property is to be taken from them, and then they criticise us because we say that legislation of this kind is pure confiscation. It takes away the property of people who rightly own it, property which has been recognised by the State, which has been taxed by the State, which has been owned and sold by the State, and which has paid death duties to the State; and on what ground? From the beginning to the end upon the ground of the firm belief that it was a continuous and abiding possession. [MINISTERIAL cries of "Oh."] Most unquestionably. Does anybody really seriously believe that where a man buys an extensive property, where, on the demand of the justices, he spends a large sum in improving it and making it suitable for his trade requirements, he does that without the conviction in his mind that there is practically a continuous security so long as he behaves himself and so long as he conducts his business properly? I say it is against commonsense that these people who invested their money had any other idea in view. I say that if that money is taken and you give them nothing, or even a small fraction, in return you will be doing a gross wrong, which possibly will not be exaggerated if people describe it as pure robbery—robbery as pure and simple as it can be, if you take the possessions of these people which they have held on those terms and give them no compensation other than you give them in this Bill. But what about the people whom you hope will conduct this great business in the future? It has been suggested that these houses have been badly conducted. If you want the best kind of men to occupy them, are you taking steps by this Bill which are likely to lead the best men either to buy or to occupy these premises? Are you giving any inducement to the class of men I have described to go into this business? I believe that this measure will not conduce to temperance, while it will do a gross injustice to a large number of people in this country. It will deteriorate those who have hitherto conducted the business, and it will lead a vast number of people in this country to think that injustice is being done by the Government; they will be as shocked as we are about a proposal which we believe to be wrong, and which we believe will do nothing for the cause of temperance.

THE SOLICITOR-GENERAL (Sir SAMUEL EVANS, Glamorganshire, Mid.): I think a great many Members of the House will agree with me that the latter portion of speech of the right hon. Gentleman was not the most forcible so far as argument is concerned. I am not to be deterred from discussing this Bill by these references and general attacks by people like Mr. Hyndman and others upon various classes of property; because we are here dealing with a particular trade, which has been under the control of the State for 500 years and which will continue to be under such control, not only in this country but in other countries as well. Now let us address ourselves to this particular Bill. I have listened with great care to the right hon. Gentleman in order to see whether or not he really agreed with us that there was still a gigantic evil arising out of the drink-traffic with which we ought to deal. He used some words, not very strong, in which he said there was a good deal still to be done. The Act of 1904 has been referred to by the right hon. Gentleman, and he was one of those who were responsible for that measure. He said that we had not followed the precedent of the Act of 1904 in any respect. I want to point out to him two or three matters dealt with by the Act of 1904—which was not an Act for confiscation, but an Act to produce temperance reform—which we have followed closely in the measure now before Parliament. The first principle of the Act of 1904, and the first respect in which we have adopted it as a precedent, is that the reduction of licences is not only a good thing but a necessary thing for the purpose of producing temperance. If there was one principle in the Act of 1904, that was the principle. When the right hon. Gentleman took part in framing that measure did he then think that his answer was enough to the allegation made by us, not only made but accepted by practically everybody, that there is a connection between the number of licences with reference to population and excess in the drink traffic, not necessarily always excess manifesting itself in drunkenness, but excess manifesting itself in the people spending a great deal more money than they ought to spend in justice to themselves and to their families by taking part in this drink traffic——

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: How is that ascertained?

SIR SAMUEL EVANS: It is ascertained in this way, that the drink bill of this country amounts to the enormous sum of over £160,000,000.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: Will the hon. and learned Gentleman allow me to ask how he ascertains that the number of licences in any particular place has a connection with the amount spent in drink, apart from the amount of drunkenness? What are the statistics which he has got in his mind?

SIR SAMUEL EVANS: The right hon. Gentleman did not allow me to continue. I was pointing out what was done under the Act of 1904, and I was assuming that the reduction you intended under the Act of 1904, and of which you now boast as the result of the Act of 1904, had some connection with temperance reform, which was the object that you had in passing the Act. I was going on to say that it wants some better answer than that which was made by the right hon. Gentleman when he referred to two villages with a few hundreds of population, where there was one conviction for drunkenness in five years in one of the villages with four public-houses, and two convictions for drunkenness in ten years in the other village, with two public-houses, or something of that kind. It is idle to take individual instances of that kind as covering a great area of ground. Surely the right hon. Gentleman would not expect anybody to accept from that, as a result of the arguments used, that there is no connection between the number of public-houses and the extent of the drink traffic. As I understand, under the Act of 1904, that was the basis of the reduction in the number of public-houses, or why did you reduce the licences to the extent of 600 or 700 per annum? In respect of the reduction of licensed premises we have followed the precedent of the Act of 1904 and extended it. The extension we make is this. If it is a good thing it ought to be spread all over the country. If it is a good thing for one part of the country surely it ought to be a good thing to promote temperance in another part of the country. If it is a good thing for one set of justices who are keen for temperance on their own incentive and in their own discretion, it is a good thing for Parliament and other justices to follow the example of those justices. Another respect in which we have followed the Act of 1904 is that we grant compensation in respect of all licences which would be extinguished during the fourteen years, from 1st April, 1909. It is really a period of fifteen years from the present time. I am coming directly to the amount of compensation. Of course the amount of compensation is a very important matter in connection with this Bill. The basis of compensation is different in our Bill from that which it has been determined to be under the Act of 1904. Then another respect in which we have followed the Act of 1904 as a precedent, is that we say that after the reduction period, in respect not only of new licences but of all licences, the State has an interest in and claims the monopoly value. If the reduction is right, I have shown how we have extended the operation of the Act of 1904. Now I want to come to the question of the amount of compensation. We on this side have alleged, I believe with truth, and we have challenged the authors of the Act of 1904 to deny it, that it was the intention of that Act to give compensation not upon the basis of profits to the brewer but upon the basis of the difference in value of the premises with a licence and the value of premises to which no licence is attached. We know what the decision of Mr. Justice Kennedy was, and we know what it is. Of course the trade fastened upon that decision, and they desired to have compensation upon the profits, showing, as has been said, that they can have 125 years purchase of the value of premises as assessed for poor rate purposes. But was that the intention of the Government in the Bill they introduced in 1904? The right hon. Gentleman knows, and if he does not answer I cannot compel him to answer. We are satisfied that the intention of the framers of that Act was the same as that of the Government, namely, to compensate merely upon the basis not of the profits of the brewer but of the difference between the value of the premises licensed and the value of the premises without a licence.

MR. LYTTELTON (St. George's, Hanover Square): Will the hon. Gentleman quote a single word in support of that argument?

SIR SAMUEL EVANS: Yes. The right hon. Gentleman was one of the authors of the Act. Will he deny that that was the intention? I have asked him, and he does not deny it.

SIR E. CARSON (Dublin University): May I say that I had to do with that Bill in its conduct through the House, and I know that that never was the intention. The intention was that the market price should be taken, just as you take the market price for the death duties. What we always had in our mind was that, as the death duties were assessed so ought the compensation to be assessed.

SIR SAMUEL EVANS: That does not answer the question. The right hon. Gentleman has not yet said that it was the intention of the promoters of that Bill to compensate on the basis of profits to the brewer. The right hon. Gentleman referred in terms of praise, in which I join, to the speech of the hon. Member for Kingston yesterday, which was admirable in many respects, but it was not accurate in every particular, and it was not accurate upon this question of compensation. He referred to the argument of the Prime Minister and to the judgment of Mr. Justice Kennedy and said—

> "The effect of the Kennedy judgment was that if under the present Act a licence was refused the owner was entitled to the market value of the licence. What the learned Judge said was that in order to get the market value you must consider what the licence would fetch by public auction."

So far from that being accurate, the learned Judge based his calculations upon the profits which the brewer made.

MR. YOUNGER (Ayr Burghs): The retail profit too.

SIR SAMUEL EVANS: Mr. Justice Kennedy, in regard to one of the houses called "The Crown," assessed the compensation in the following way. He took the barrelage which was agreed to be 169 barrels and the various figures given by the expert witnesses of the profit on the barrels to the brewer;

then he adopted a middle figure, putting the profit at 14s. 6d. per barrel, and this annual profit capitalised at ten years purchase made the total figure £1,412 10s. Therefore, the method adopted by the learned Judge was the number of barrels supplied by the brewers for consumption on the premises, and the profit to the brewer in respect of each barrel, and then he took the ten years purchase on that; yet the hon. Member said the learned Judge said they must not have regard to the profit of the brewer. With regard to compensation, I have admitted that it will not be anything like as much under our Bill so far as the brewer is concerned as it is now under the law declared by Mr. Justice Kennedy. So far as the fairness and justice of the case admits, we are giving compensation on a proper basis when we take into consideration the number of years purchase accorded by Mr. Justice Kennedy. Under the Act of 1904, it was never intended that this House should never adhere to the principle of a time-limit. The matter was left entirely open. What is the remedy proposed by the right hon. Gentleman and his Party now for the evil which he admits does still exist? He has a right, of course, in this debate to make a speech purely by way of criticism, but I did not hear a single suggestion of any sort of remedy to meet the gigantic evil which still exists in the carrying on of the drink traffic in this country. The 1904 reduction would not go on for a long time for many reasons. The justices when they were weeding out the worst houses would not use their discretion to shut up the larger houses, and there would be this difficulty in the way—that they would not have the means wherewithal to pay compensation for them; therefore, the time must come when the policy of the Act of 1904 would come to an end and must be supplemented by some measure such as the one we are now bringing in. This is a Second Reading debate. Many points have been made which are Committee points, although I admit they are important; points, for instance, as to the fourteen years being a sufficient reduction period, and the terms of the compensation basis, but there is nothing underlying this Bill except the principle of control of the licences by the nation and the principle of having a reduction period at all. I am prepared personally to adopt as my own the principle of the Bill, as stated by the Archbishop of Canterbury in a speech he made yesterday. That is a clear issue upon which the House can divide upon the Second Reading. The Archbishop says—

> "The main principle is that after all such processes as may be required to make it fair and considerate have been carried through the State, shall, and the people of England shall, for that is the same thing, regain and hold due control and power over a trade which stands in some respect apart from all other trades as to its possible effect upon national well-being in the lives of the men and women of England."

That is a simple principle which is really the dividing issue between us apart from these other questions more fitly and properly and conveniently dealt with in Committee upon which the House will be asked to record its views. The right hon. Gentleman, in answer to the Prime Minister, gave this rather qualified reply to the question as to whether or not he supported and approved the time-limit. He says—

> "We do not approve of the time-limit because it is incompatible with the compulsory levy."

That, of course, says that the time-limit in this Bill does not meet with the approval of the right hon. Gentleman, and of the Party which he now leads, as applied in this Bill. There still remains the question: Is he in favour of a time-limit for the purpose of being able to deal with this trade or not, because you will never deal effectually with the evil arising out of the drink traffic unless you have at some period or other—and this is not the time to discuss whether fourteen years is the right period—the full right of control by the State, which unfortunately it has lost since 1904, but which up to that time it had in the fullest measure except with regard at the pre-1869 beer-houses. I am not going into the long controversy with regard to that. The House is very familiar with the history of the subject, but I desire to protest—I think I did once before—against the suggestion that any bargain was made by this House with respect to buying the right of the State to control these licences. The right hon. Gentleman mentioned the word bargain to-day. Between whom was the bargain made? Who are the agents on the one side and on the other? Who are the principals represented by those agents? A bargain was never made in this House, and this House, whatever bargain was made outside by other people of which we know nothing, cannot be tied to any such bargain as that. Brewers can tie their houses, but they cannot tie this House. I want to say one or two words with reference to the alleged injustice at the end of the fourteen years period. I hope the House will forgive me if I do not argue the question of the fourteen years. I have referred already to the Kennedy judgment, where the House will have observed in the one case ten years purchase and in the other eleven years was given as the basis of compensation. That in itself might be a short answer to the argument that fourteen years is too short. But, at any rate, now is not the time to discuss that question, or if anyone else wishes to discuss it, I do not. What is to happen at the end of fourteen years? The monopoly value is to be taken by the State, and the State is to have full control over all the licences, because all the licences will be put upon the same basis as a new licence is put upon now. Has the State any right to any monopoly value? Answer: "Yes. The Act of 1904." What is the difference so far as the State is concerned in its claim for a monopoly value in respect of this kind of traffic between a new licence in 1904, and that licence after the reduction period? After the reduction period that monopoly value will be seized in respect of every licence, but the statements that have been made all over the country, and which have misled many people with regard to what will take place at the end of the reduction period, I think, are not well-founded. What will happen undoubtedly will be that the licences then in existence, 60,000 or 65,000 or whatever the number may be, more or less, will be held by respectable tenants, otherwise they would have been taken away before, and what will happen will be continuity of business in these houses until a further reduction takes place, either by the action of the public or by the action of the justices—a continuity of the business in the hands of the same tenants.

MR. YOUNGER: The Bill does not say so.

SIR SAMUEL EVANS: The Bill does not say what is to take place in every particular at the end of fourteen years, but does anybody suppose that the licensing justices in this country are going to turn out neck and crop the tenants of 60,000 licensed houses? What will happen will be this, that if there is a very profitable house the tenant will come and say: "I want a renewal of my licence." The justices will have a right to say: "Yes, your licence is required apparently in this locality. We will renew it, but the State is entitled to so much out of that licence." Why should it not? Let me give one or two illustrations. The hon. and learned Member for Kingston said yesterday that in the year 1907 three Glamorganshire licences were granted for lump sums, by way of monopoly value, amounting in the three cases to £13,500. The figures are to be seen in the Blue-book. They are £6,000 for one house, £4,500 for the second, and £3,000 for the third. We make it impossible under the provisions of the Bill now before Parliament to have a lump sum at all. It is necessary for the licensing justices to fix the monopoly value year by year, and they cannot go any further. What happens with regard to these houses? For the moment I will take the annual value instead of the lump sum. At £4,500 as the average monopoly value, at 4 per cent., you get £180 a year. That is sufficiently accurate for the purpose of my illustration. Supposing the house had been licensed in 1903 no monopoly value is raised at all. Let us assume that that village with its two licensed houses increases in population, and a third house is licensed there. The houses are practically of equal value. If these houses have been licensed in 1903 they will have saved during the fourteen years the sum of £3,600, and for twenty years they will enjoy the monopoly value of £180 a year, which the State does not take, and which it would take if the house was licensed in 1905. So that if there is a difference upon this hard line of demarcation of two years in the time the licence was granted, in the one case the licensee gets £3,000 odd, in the other case the brewers get the £3,000 odd. Under these circumstances is there any injustice in putting all these houses on the same footing? We cannot make the brewer disgorge that £3,000, but we can take from him the £180 monopoly value. It was never thought by the best leaders of the Conservative Party in 1904, that a final step had been taken in connection with temperance reform, for the matter was kept open specially. I will quote from two speeches made on this question. Lord Hugh Cecil, speaking on 6th June, 1904, said—

> "The Bill did not say, it did not imply, that they were not to take away licences after a period with notice. The Bill did not deal with that question at all, but it dealt with what was to be the right of magistrates under the existing law as to refusing licences without compensation. It did not interfere in the least with the future right of Parliament to set up whatever time-limit it might think proper under which licences might cease altogether after due notice given."

Speaking on 7th June, 1904, the Leader of the Opposition said—

> "I believe that the anxiety about the time-limit is due to a fear lest we are shutting the door on any kind of temperance reform in the future other than the present Bill. There is nothing in this Bill which is going to stand in the way of any future reform."

That shows clearly that it was never intended that it should be finally decided in 1904 that no time-limit should be imposed. That is the main principle of this Bill, and the same principle is laid down in the two speeches I have quoted, and also by the Archbishop of Canterbury. That is the principle upon which we depend to carry out temperance reform. The right hon. Gentleman opposite has asked what connection has the time-limit with temperance reform? It has every connection, because you now tempt people into the trade by huge profits. I am talking about the people who have made such profits as £6,000 in one day. The connection between the time-limit and temperance reform is that, when the State takes the monopoly value, there will be less temptation for people to embark upon such a trade, fewer beer-houses will exist, and fewer will be built. It is idle for anybody who has any knowledge of temperance reform to say that the consumption of drink does not depend upon the law of supply, but upon the law of demand. [OPPOSITION cries of "Hear, hear."] Have hon. Members opposite never heard of the temptation a man experiences when he sees a public-house? Has anybody ever heard of the provision made by Act of Parliament forbidding the payment of wages in public-houses? What is the meaning of that? The danger is not the demand for beer, but the temptation to a man to drink. You have by law forbidden the holding of election meetings on licensed premises because there would be a temptation to drink. I am afraid that that provision has had a coach and horses driven through it many a time, and practically every public-house and every tied house has been used in the interest of one Party. The Government have been asked: Is there any relationship between the number of public-houses and the temptation to drink? I have known applications made for the erection of a public-house in a convenient place intended to catch the workmen either on their way to their work or on their way from their work. I know this is a legitimate practice from the point of view of the trade, because it is well known that they want to plank their public-houses in the most tempting places. If any hon. Member opposite happened to be sitting as a licensing justice and an application were made for a licence for a gin palace just at the entrance to a colliery yard, so as to tempt workmen on their way to the colliery or from it, would he think that that was a convenient or an inconvenient place and would he grant the licence?

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: But this is a question of the reduction of licences.

SIR SAMUEL EVANS: In the case I have mentioned the man sees a public-house in front of him and at once he has a thirst or somebody invites him into that licensed house. The right hon. Gentleman who preceded me said he did not like hard words being used by one side of the House against the other, but nevertheless he said that we were robbers and confiscators. That was equivalent to saying that he would not call any hon. Member of this House a thief; all he means is that we are misguided, and that we are only doing something which is tantamount to robbery or confiscation. But we are not going to be intimidated by threats of that kind any more than the Church of England Temperance Society is going to be intimidated. We are quite willing to rest our claim for supporting this measure upon the justice of the Bill itself, and upon the amount of good which it is likely to do. Let me remind the House what was stated in a letter written by Lord Burton, which was read at a meeting convened by the Licensed Victuallers Central Protection Society of London at the Queen's Hall. He said—

> "I trust there will be no talk of compromise—"

He at any rate does not desire any extension of the fourteen years time-limit. He goes on to say—

> "—no sign of weakening in the slightest degree in the general opposition to this attempt to plunder and ruin all who are connected with the trade. The Bill is a political fraud. Temperance is the last thing it is intended to promote. Its real aim is to rob and crush who perforce are its political opponents."

Then his Lordship goes on to say—

> "They might smile at the crude suggestions of a private Member new to legislation, but for this impossible and mischievous Bill the Statesmen who were at this time the advisers of the King in the management of the Empire were responsible. God save the King. The Bill was the first effort at Socialism, which meant the stamping out of individuality and the absolute negation of personal liberty. The Bill must be defeated or withdrawn. If it was not, if they and those whom they represented surrendered, the repetition of the words which declared that Britons would not be slaves, would be but lip service."

Britons have to be slaves to the drink traffic, and in other respects. I will not refer further to the other portions of the speeches made in the Queen's Hall beyond quoting the words of a representative who spoke on behalf of the Liverpool branch of the Protection Society, who asked—

> "Every man and woman in that hall during the next few months until the Bill was killed to pay not a farthing to any tradesman—he did not care who he was—who was favourable to the Bill."

Would any hon. Member in this House get up and declare that he would himself, in sending his order to the grocer or the butcher, say: "I won't give you this order unless you promise to vote against this Bill"? That is the way in which the Bill is being fought by the brewers. The meeting at the Queen's Hall where those speeches were delivered did not consist of publicans in the ordinary sense, but they were the owners of tied houses, and they were not the creation of any Act of Parliament. The intention of Parliament was that the licence should be given to a particular individual, and as a matter of fact they were so held. The holders of those licences have been got hold of by the brewers, and the brewer now seeks to keep this property and requires to be compensated, not upon the value of the licence, but upon the basis of the profits he has been able to squeeze out of the wretched tenant he has put into his house. Whatever hon. Members opposite may say, I repeat that it is the intention of the Government to add a very large slice to the slices that have already been given by this House in favour of temperance reform. We believe that the only way in which we shall get any real temperance reform in this country is by reducing licences compulsorily, by establishing a time-limit, and by controlling the whole of the licences after fourteen years by the State. You will never get temperance reform unless you can abolish the tied-house system, and you will never get rid of tied houses without a time-limit. You will never be able to accomplish this unless at the end of fourteen years the justices can say to an applicant: "We decline to renew this licence unless the licensee is a free man in a free house." The work which we have set ourselves to do is no easy task. It is a task which demands courage by reason of the combined interests which are marshalled against us, but I am glad to say that it is evoking the enthusiasm of some of the best forces in the country. This particular Bill in itself is not perfect. It is certainly not complete. Other problems connected with the drink traffic will still have to be tackled, but, so far as this measure goes, we say in presenting and proceeding with it that our aims are honest and praiseworthy. We say further that the methods are not unfair, but that, on the contrary, they are fair and just, and we believe that the ultimate result of the measure will be for the lasting good of our people and our country.

MR. F. E. SMITH (Liverpool, Walton): The hon. and learned Gentleman has made at least one valuable contribution to our debate. Those who have admired at a respectful distance the strategy which has determined the policy of the Government in introducing this particular Bill have been not a little puzzled to determine what motives induced them to bring it forward and to persevere in it with such determination. We have now learned the reason in an illuminating sentence from the hon. and learned Gentleman when he informed us that every public-house is a committee-room for the Tory Party. This is really penetrating to the heart of their determination.

SIR SAMUEL EVANS: I did not say every public-house, I said every tied-house. [OPPOSITION cries of "No."]

MR. F. E. SMITH: I quite accept what the right hon. Gentleman states, but even putting it in the limited form that every tied public-house is a Tory committee-room, if the hon. and learned Gentleman is correct in saying that these houses are arrayed against him, it is quite sufficient to explain the zeal with which this Bill is being pressed forward. The motives of the moral reformers would appear to be not entirely unmixed. The hon. and learned Gentleman asked a question which those who speak on that side of the House are never tired of putting, and which they seem to think is in the nature of the case unanswerable. He asked: Are we on this side of the House under any circumstances in favour of the policy of a reduction? And then when we are confronted with some supposed answer which has not yet been forthcoming, when we are confronted with the dilemma that we are not in favour of that policy, we are asked—How do you justify your introduction and support of the 1904 Act? I should have thought that the answer to that is obvious. The answer is that under the 1904 Act you left the local justices who have a knowledge of each particular locality to judge for themselves and of their own unfettered discretion whether that particular locality did or did not suffer from a redundancy of licensed premises. Do you put forward that discretion as comparable in any degree with a proposal for the automatic reduction of licences by a triumvirate in London? If you do, it shows that you are utterly incapable of appreciating the principles on which the 1904 Act depends. When I spoke on the First Reading of this Bill I said that the country would never draw a distinction between railway investors and investors in licensed property who have bought their stock on the open market. I remember that when I ventured to make that observation on the First Reading it was treated as a most exquisite piece of humour. I do not know whether it appears to the supporters of the Government that the humour was much in evidence during the last few weeks, when opportunities have been given for presenting our views of the Bill to the country. Let me ask—What is the answer to the suggestion that, so far as the purchaser of brewery stock upon the market is concerned, he is entitled to the same protection on the part of the State as the purchaser of railway stock? Only one answer has been attempted in the whole course of the debates, and it is that in the case of the holder of licensed property you have a yearly licence. The moment you say that the annual value is not the measure of what such person possesses, you give away the whole case. One has only to look at the question. If it be true that one year is the measure of the interest, why do you give a fourteen years' time-limit? Why squander thirteen years of the nation's monopoly of which they have been too long deprived? Why postpone the happy moment when the country will repossess itself of that which it ought never to have lost? [MINISTERIAL cheers.] There are many hon. Gentlemen opposite who think it ought to be done at once at the end of a year. Fortunately, for many reasons, they are not in the majority, and the majority are rather committed to the view that you cannot accept the principle that the interested persons having these interests are limited to a single year. If they are not limited to a single year, how are you going to determine them? Is it pretended that a fourteen years time-limit is based upon any actuarial calculation which can be tested? And here let me point out to the hon. and learned Gentleman who said that there never was a statutory right, and who passed by very rapidly indeed the case of the ante-1869 beer-houses—let me point out that so far as the ante-1869 beer-houses are concerned they had that very statutory right on the absence of which you have again and again insisted as the only justification for any confiscation at all. When the question was asked how it was that these houses ever obtained this privilege the answer was that until the year 1870 these beer-houses were allowed to sell beer without obtaining a licence from the justices, and simply in virtue of the enjoyment of an excise licence. In that circumstance Parliament recognised a vested interest, and thought it expedient to deal with them in the 1870 Act. So far as the ante-1869 beer-houses were concerned, they provided that these licences ought never to be taken away but on one of four causes. I can summarise generally the character of these causes by saying that every one of them had something to do with bad character or bad conduct on the part of the licensee, so that until the 1904 Act was introduced it was the fact that no less than one-third of the licensed premises in the country had an absolute statutory right to renewal. What is really the relation of the Government to them? They say that in 1904 Parliament interfered with that statutory right of renewal. Is the suggestion brought forward that, having taken away in 1904 for good and valuable consideration this absolute statutory right of renewal, we are entitled in 1908 to say that we shall take them away still further on the basis of the illusory compensation which we now substitute? The hon. and learned Gentleman with a great show of indignation says that there never was a bargain made. I agree, but there was an implied undertaking based upon the honour of this House. [MINISTERIAL cries of "No."] If this is taken away which had statutory sanction at that time, four years ago, the privileges which were substituted should not also be taken away. The hon. and learned Gentleman does not appreciate this ethical suggestion. Does he seriously suggest that there is any distinction to be drawn between the case of a man who, before 1904, invested his money in a beer-house and the case of a man who invested his money in railway stock? Will anybody on that side of the House tell us how the investor in an 1869 beer-house could possibly suppose that he was investing in a precarious property when one-third of the licensed premises of the country were of that class? Where was the precariousness? Where was the unwisdom of speculating in it? What is your right four years afterwards to say: "We will give you a fourteen years time-limit?" That is the case as far as one-third of the licensed premises are concerned, and I wish to ask hon. Gentlemen to consider the case of the other two-thirds. When once the yearly argument is given up, as it has been for the purposes of this Bill, the only problem which presents itself for solution is—What is the tenure which the State encouraged the investor to accept? Let me remind the House that a very authoritative document exists on that point—very much more authoritative than many of those which are quoted with approval by hon. Gentlemen opposite. In 1890 the Commissioners for Inland Revenue were requested by the Chancellor of the Exchequer to prepare a memorandum upon the death duties in dealing with licensed premises in order that many doubts might be set at rest. An official report was presented by the Commissioners for Inland Revenue, and I would venture to ask the attention of the House to that report. Dealing, first of all, with the case of the death of a lease-holder publican, they said that it is assumed always that the licence will continue indefinitely to be renewed. Then dealing with the death of a free-holder publican they say that the annual value of the House is treated in the succession duty account as permanently enhanced by the licence. They said that the annual values are capitalised for the whole life of the successor on the presumption that the licence will so long endure. We may have been wrong on this side of the House, licensed victuallers may have been wrong, and the unfortunate investors in brewery shares may have been wrong, but there can be no other explanation of the principle which the representatives of the State deliberately adopted in 1890 for this purpose, except that in their view these licenses would be indefinitely renewed. Can it be suggested that the ordinary investor was bound to take a sounder view? The only answer is that that doctrine was once and for all disposed of by the decision in the case of Sharpe *v.* Wakefield. That case has nothing whatever to do with the proposals brought forward by the Government and the provisions in this Bill. The Court in Sharpe *v.* Wakefield merely decided that the local justices should deal with a licence of a particular house upon particular local grounds and on the sworn evidence of witnesses as to fact. Is it suggested that that is analogous in principle to the wholesale dealing with licences by gentlemen in London who have no knowledge of the locality? You have only to read the judgment of Lord Halsbury to understand the real meaning of the Sharpe *v.* Wakefield decision. Lord Halsbury said—

> "Magistrates must exercise judicial discretion and not by evasion attempt to repeal the law which permits public-houses to exist. Further, the justices would remember that a year before a licence had been granted."

[HON. MEMBERS on the MINISTERIAL Benches: Go on; read the rest.] That is all I have here before me, but nothing which follows qualifies what I have read. I may remind hon. Gentlemen opposite that Lord Bramwell said in the same relation—

> "The Legislature has most clearly showed that it contemplated that licences would usually be renewed; that the taking away of a man's livelihood would not be practised cruelly or wantonly."

Is it suggested that on Sharpe *v.* Wakefield or on the dicta of Lord Halsbury and Lord Bramwell you can base the wholesale reduction of licences which is to take place under this Bill? This Bill may be right or wrong, but the less it is founded on the authority of Sharpe *v.* Wakefield the more likely it is to be successful among those who are familiar with that judgment. Accepting that statement of the effect of Sharpe *v.* Wakefield, and the circumstances are not really disputed, this Bill, whether necessary or not, is a Bill which is going to cause great hardship. I did not gather that the Under-Secretary last night seriously disputes the position that the Bill is going to cause great hardship. The figures which have been given by Mr. Buxton and Mr. Peat show that, speaking generally, in the case of a large number of prudent and successful breweries, no dividends will be paid on either preference or ordinary shares, and in the payment of debenture interest there will be deficiencies ranging from £20,000 to £60,000. The Under-Secretary last night attempted to console brewers and investors by saying that at the conclusion of the fourteen years they would have the sum of £17,000,000 by which they could deal with the losses which are estimated by the hon. Member for Spen Valley at not less than £100,000,000. The Under-Secretary argued that they would be compensated by a sum of £27,000,000, £17,000,000 of which is to come from reserve stock—a large proportion of which is already invested in licensed property. The perfectly astounding suggestion was made that the result of the Government proposal would be that £10,000,000 or £11,000,000 which was to be paid by the Government for compensation would be available at the end of the fourteen years time-limit, as a further contribution to the money necessary to make up the shortage of £100,000,000. The Under-Secretary seems to be totally unaware that the greater part of this £11,000,000 will have been paid during the currency of the fourteen years time-limit.

THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. HERBERT SAMUEL, Yorkshire, Cleveland): I was not using that as a set-off against the 60,000 houses which will remain but against the loss on the whole 95,000.

MR. F. E. SMITH: What the hon. Gentleman says comes to this, that in this sum of £27,000,000 which is to be available to meet the £100,000,000 at the expiration of the time-limit—[Ironical

MINISTERIAL laughter.] We are constantly told that the number of houses which will remain is to be equal in value to the houses existing at the present time and that the brewers lose nothing.

SIR THOMAS WHITTAKER: No.

MR. F. E. SMITH: Then the hon. Gentleman should control his enthusiastic supporters in the country who have been saying that there will be no real loss to the brewers, that the increased value of the houses that remain will compensate for the loss of the monopoly value of £100,000,000. Even if it is not £100,000,000 but £80,000,000, what becomes of the prophecy made by the Lord Chancellor when the 1904 Bill was introduced, that the value of the licensed property would be increased by that Bill to £300,000,000? And now that the falsity of that prediction is exposed, hon. Gentleman say that the monopoly value of the licences is £100,000,000 or £80,000,000. And towards that monopoly value the only sum the Government suggest as available for the relief of the shareholders is £17,000,000 which comes from the reserve fund to-day. Why is the prudent trader to be specially mulcted? Who are hon. Gentlemen opposite to lay hands upon the business savings of their political opponents? Why is the prudent virgin to be worse treated than her negligent friends? Now, if it is undisputed that you are going to injure the shareholders to this extent, it is not uninteresting to discover who will be the people likely to suffer if we are going to allow it to be done. Take the case of a brewery which has published a full detailed list of its shareholders. Take the case of Meux's Brewery. [MINISTERIAL ironical laughter.] That is received with laughter, but this artificial merriment does not show much intelligence or discrimination on the part of hon. Gentlemen opposite. If I were founding an argument on the way in which Meux had carried on their business there might have been some point in the laugh; but I am merely pointing out the social and business position of their shareholders. What is the capital of this company? Four per cent. first mortgage debenture stock, £600,000; 6 per cent. second mortgage debenture stock, £400,000; cumulative preference share capital, £500,000; and ordinary share capital, £500,000. The debenture stock and preference share capital, £1,500,000, were issued to and paid for by the public. I invite the House to consider how that £1,500,000 subscribed for by the public was contributed. [MINISTERIAL cries of "When."] It does not matter to the argument when. Of this £1,500,000 the members of the licensed trade contributed £8,861; business classes, banks, investment companies, £306,951; professional classes, £529,698; trustees under wills, spinsters, married women and widows, £654,490. [MINISTERIAL cries of "Shame."] Is it not more shameful to rob these people? [OPPOSITION cheers, and MINISTERIAL cries of "Who did it?"] They expressed no discontent till hon. Gentlemen appeared on the scene with this Bill. But at any rate I desire to say that hon. Gentlemen will agree that their particular grievance is against the Government and not against anybody else. Is the proposition that if you find an imprudent investor you may rob him. All I ask hon. Gentlemen opposite is, do they believe after all that has happened that the country at large will allow them to inflict this species of pecuniary wrong on these classes of investors? The Chancellor of the Exchequer goes to a public meeting in the Albert Hall, and says—

> "If the Government goes down on this issue it will be with flags flying in a moral cause."

The moral cause, I suppose, is that you reduce drunkenness by reducing drinking facilities. If there is any other principle in the Bill, I have failed to discover it. Hon. Gentlemen opposite may be right or wrong in their view, but there is no difference of opinion that if they are going to embrace this moral cause and pin their colours to the mast of the Bill, it makes no difference at all whether this drinking which they are going to stop is carried on in licensed premises or in clubs. We all agree with that. It is then *ex hypothesi* obvious that it is essential to prevent the growth of fresh clubs or to reduce the number of those now existing. If your patent medicine is good it must be applied with impartiality to every class of patient. Let hon. Gentlemen opposite reconcile their own remedies and not come to us for an explanation of them. What did the hon. Member for Spen Valley say in 1907? He said—

> "It is useless to reduce the number of public-houses, restrict the hours of sale, and to facilitate improved methods of management if clubs are allowed to spring up in all directions."

And the hon. Gentleman, and a good many other Members of this House, still think so, but let me tell them that, accepting their principles, this Bill in the treatment of clubs is a fantastic imposture if it pretends to do anything of the sort so long as each coterie of individuals now meeting in a public-house is still at liberty when displaced under the Bill to form a club. I do not say that the increase of clubs is mischievous, nor do I express an opinion that England will tolerate their suppression. This is a problem to be solved not by us but by you. It is your case that it is mischievous, and what are the figures? In 1887 there were 1,982 clubs; in 1896 there were 3,655; in 1903 there were 6,371; in 1904 there were 6,468; in 1905 there were 6,589; in 1906 there were 6,721; in 1907 there were 6,907; and in 1908 the number was 7,110. The hon. Gentleman will see that in the last twenty years clubs in which drink is sold have increased from 1,982 to 7,110. But that does not exhaust the growth of clubs, because as the chairman of the Durham sessions pointed out the other day, there was an increase of 2,000 persons in the membership of the clubs in their area, although there was no increase in the clubs. The clientèle of the clubs is, therefore, gradually growing out of proportion to the total number of clubs, and I challenge any hon. Member who follows me to show one word or one line in the Bill which prevents the indiscriminate multiplication of clubs which are not mere drinking shops. We are not dealing with drinking clubs or public-houses that are mere drinking houses; we are dealing with public-houses many of which have a thirty years' good character, and we point out that your remedy will do nothing that will prevent clubs springing up. We are not talking of mere drinking shops but of the springing up of clubs, doubtless perfectly well-conducted, but in which drink can be obtained—the sort of club that the Solicitor-General would say the working-man could not pass without having a thirst. Let us hear no more of your provisions for dealing with badly conducted clubs. We must compare like with like. On your theory the provisions of the Bill are farcical. It is so important that this should be exposed and it goes so directly to the heart of the Bill that I make no excuse for asking the House to consider what is the existing law in regard to clubs. Under the Licensing Act of 1902 the clerk of every petty sessional division has to keep a register with details of the club. Under subsection 3, a return has to be made every January, and under subsection 4 the secretary of the new club has to furnish a return. Under Section 26, if drink is sold in an unregistered club, the penalty is a month's imprisonment or a £50 fine. Under Section 28 of that Act a club may be struck off the register on the complaint of any person: (*a*) That it has ceased to exist, or has less than twenty-five members; (*b*) that it is not conducted in good faith as a club, or that it is kept for an unlawful purpose; (*c*) that there is frequently drunkenness there; (*d*) that there is illegal sale of intoxicating liquors; (*e*) that non-members habitually resort to it for the purpose of obtaining drink; and (*f*) that it occupies premises within twelve months of their being licensed premises. That is the state of the law when the Government introduce this Bill to deal with a great and growing evil and one the solution of which is essential to their moral panacea. What does this Bill do? By Section 36, registration is to be annual instead of a return, and under Section 37, any person may, as to new registration or renewal, lodge objection on the ground that the club is used mainly as a drinking club or on the grounds which I have already read as being included in the Act of 1902. In this Bill, registration has been substituted for the January return and the only new ground upon which objection can be taken to the registration of a new club or the re-registration of an existing club, is that it is a mere drinking shop. Where is the clause which prevents the springing up of new clubs or prevents the opening of a drinking club four doors lower down than the public-house whose licence you have taken away? On this club question my views are entirely independent, because I am proud to say that in Liverpool, the complexion of which has been Conservative for many years, there is no single working men's club where drink can be obtained to-day or has ever been obtained, but I ask hon. Gentlemen opposite who hold strong moral views on this subject what they think of the position of their colleagues who represent London constituencies. I do not hesitate to say that, sitting cheek by jowl with these moral reformers, are men who owe their seats in this House to the exertions of political clubs which, although they are not drinking clubs, are places where drink is supplied with the same facility with which it is supplied in public-houses, and where it can be obtained at hours when public-houses are closed and on Sundays as well. They deserve careful study. Take, for instance, the case of Walthamstow Liberal and Radical Club. I believe the hon. Member who represents Walthamstow is a convinced supporter of this Bill and he is satisfied with Sunday closing. How are his supporters generating their zeal on his behalf and amusing themselves on Sunday mornings at the Walthamstow Liberal and Radical Club, Buxton Road, High Street? Here is the programme of a Sunday morning variety entertainment: Young Smiler; Dora Dalby; The Campeons; Sam Williams; Daisy Reed; Chan C. Roberts. On Sunday evening there is George Elmer's Company in the up-to-date military comedy "The Major." Then what do we find in the constituency of the Parliamentary Secretary to the Admiralty, who played a conspicuous, though hardly a successful, part in the Peckham election. At the North Camberwell Radical Club we find entertainments are going on in precisely the same way. The Parliamentary Secretary is the President of the Club, and I would suggest to the Government, that the President instead of the Secretary shall pay the fine of £20 for which the Bill provides, if drunkenness is proved on the premises and reasonable care is not shown. There will be much more chance of obtaining the money, and as a salutary example the effect will be much greater. What do we find in the Camberwell Club? That club advertised: "Sunday morning, lecture upon the Principles of Malthus. Sunday afternoon, musical comedy, "The Hypocrites." How does this champion, this convinced advocate of the cause of effective moral reform at the admitted injury of investors, deal with this matter when assailed in the Press? He wrote a letter to the *Daily Telegraph* in which he said that if the parson could not compete for his patronage with "Iolanthe," so much the worse for the parson. Hon. Gentlemen opposite cannot afford to deal with the clubs. They dare not. Their political lives are not worth a moment's purchase if they do. The explanation is that in dealing with the English people you are dealing with a strong, virile race. The reason why you cannot compel them to reduce their clubs and why in this Bill you shrink from dealing with them is that you know that the people in a democratic country will not allow you to do it, and when you admit that in connection with the clubs, you have driven the last nail into the coffin of the present Bill. The Chancellor of the Exchequer talks about going down with all the ship's flags flying. The ship, I would suggest, is the s.s. "The Whited Sepulchre," and has the "Jolly Roger" flying from the mast. The Chancellor of the Exchequer said he would rather lose fifty seats than win one by such means as those by which Peckham was won, and hon. Gentlemen shouted their agreement with that statement when a new Member, a teetotaller, entered this House, by shouting out, "The voice of beer." Where is the evidence of the drunkenness which it is said existed at Peckham? Where is the petition that ought to have followed? Are the party funds depleted? There were only two convictions of drunkenness on the day of the election at Peckham, and in one the gentleman charged explained that he was really developing a Free Trade argument, a defence which was unsuccessful; while in the other, the person, a lady, was a stranger to Peckham who had been the heroine of similar adventures elsewhere. That was the only drunkenness that took place at Peckham. Was Manchester won by improper measures? Hon. Gentlemen know perfectly well that I am not repeating these victories we have won to make in this House a cheap party score. I only refer to these elections in order to press on the right hon. Gentlemen opposite whether the experiences in these constituencies are not certain to be repeated all over the country as long as this Bill is persevered with. It is certain that it will be so, because the country is not convinced of the honesty and integrity of the Bill. You are under a great delusion when you think that you are great moral reformers and that that is the cause of these reverses. Hon. Gentlemen opposite will do well, if the Bill is to be persevered in, to play a losing game with more decency and self-respect, for they will be given an opportunity of exhibiting dignity in adversity in Opposition. The democratic party when successful at the polls praises the people as the supreme repositories of political wisdom. When defeated they point to the crapulous dupes of an odious trade. Hon. Members opposite should turn from this misconceived measure to the music-hall *bonhomie* and the unrestricted conviviality of those Radical clubs to which they owe their present opportunities for mischief. If they do that, history will not indeed say they were moral reformers, but at least it will not have to record of them that, looking in the clouds, they scorned

> "The base degrees
> By which they did ascend."

MR. A. E. W. MASON (Coventry): The Prime Minister and the Under-Secretary for Home Affairs yesterday evening devoted a considerable portion of their speeches to the question of the reduction of licences. I cannot hold, and I do not think the majority of the Members of this House can hold, that the present Bill can stand or fall upon the question of the reduction of licences. It must stand or fall on other questions. It must stand or fall upon the question of whether the reduction of licences is accompanied with the reduction of, and an erection of safeguards against, other institutions for the sale of drink already existing with fewer precautions, under fewer safeguards, with longer hours, and with less supervision than licensed houses. It must go beyond that. It must stand or fall on the decision of this House as to whether it is just or not as a financial measure. The Prime Minister yesterday, as well as on the First Reading, stated his case with the greatest lucidity. The financial provision of this Bill is to recover for the State the monopoly value with which it has parted and the right hon. Gentleman asked the question yesterday, "Do you agree that the State has a right to resume the value with which it has once parted?" The word "resume" is the word upon which I should like to speak, because it has not yet been proved that the State has parted neglectfully or otherwise with a monopoly value. The State has stood idly by while the monopoly has been bought and sold, while millions have been invested in it on the strength of the indifference of the State to that monopoly, and besides all that it has levied a special taxation upon the licensed trade as a trade specially favoured of the State. Now, having seen that the monopoly value with which they have parted is a good thing, they propose to resume it. The State made a mistake. Most people when they make a mistake have to pay for it. The State made a mistake in parting with this monopoly value. It is not the brewers nor the publican nor those humble investors who have not received too much consideration who are to blame, but the State, first and last. It might have retained its monopoly value, but it parted with it on easy terms. I do not suggest that the State has not a right to resume the monopoly value if it chooses, but it is for the House to consider whether the State shall not do so with fairness to the community over which it rules, and which it is supposed to represent. I listened very carefully to the speech made by the Solicitor-General, and I think he repeated to-day what he certainly said on the First Reading when he discussed the question of the monopoly value, waving aside the question of where the millions of money paid for the monopoly value had gone to. I do not see the relevancy of his suggestion, unless he assumes that the money so paid at once goes back to the pockets of the people who pay it. I do not wish to refer to a particular public-house to raise a cheap laugh; but I think he could have found where some of the money went to by consulting his colleague the Secretary of State for War. This money has gone out of the licensed trade and the State is now going to compel those who have already paid for the licensed premises once to pay over again. The really relevant question is not who has got the money but who paid the money for these licences. I have not the slightest hesitation in believing that the persons who paid for them once will pay again. The hon. and learned Gentleman shakes his head, but I do not see how he is going to avoid it unless he proposes to ruin all the existing breweries and put up a new lot in their stead. I intended to ask the Prime Minister whether during these debates he would kindly lay upon the Table the figures that enabled him to arrive at the decision that fourteen years would be an effective limit of time, but it was with some consternation that I gathered there were no figures. The Solicitor-General this afternoon said that others might avoid this question but that he would not.

SIR SAMUEL EVANS interjected a remark that did not reach the Gallery.

MR. A. E. W. MASON: I quite accept that, but I might point out to the hon. and learned Gentleman that the whole question is the time-limit. I have some figures which I should like to read to the House. They present a startling summary of what is going to happen to nine brewery companies if this Bill as it stands becomes law. I have chosen nine breweries, some of which are good and flourishing, and others of which are not in a floursihing condition. I have done so deliberately, because I think the system of selecting a certain number of good breweries and saying: "See how easily they can recoup themselves," or selecting certain languishing concerns and saying: "See how easily they can be ruined," is not a fair one. Of the nine breweries, the total capital at the present time is £28,230,391; the estimated value of the capital invested in freehold and leasehold licensed property where the licences are extinguished would be £5,269,000. The loss of capital to be provided for in fourteen years is £21,076,640. Therefore it is calculated that if the whole amount was capitalised at the end of fourteen years on the basis of all the profits being invested at 4 per cent. compound interest, with the exception of the payment on the debentures, the actual loss at the end of fourteen years will be £8,729,000—that, of course, is if the State resumes the monopoly value. That is the point of view that any accountant would have to take up. As I understand, the State does intend to resume the monopoly value. I quite admit that one of the dfficulties in this matter is that we have not had a proper definition of what is monopoly value. The Under-Secretary for Home Affairs did begin to tell us something with regard to that. He said it was not to include the profit of the publican or of the brewer, but that it was to include the goodwill. I should be glad if some member of the Government speaking with an authoritative voice, would take some concrete instance of the market value of particular licensed premises and tell us, on the assumption that the value of those premises remains the same at the end of fourteen years, what it is the intention of the Government that the licence-holder should be paid at the end of fourteen years. In discussing the monopoly value we are certainly hampered on that point.

Now, I want to say a few words on another question, the question of compensation, and here I agree with a good deal of what was said by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Dublin, that we are in a more difficult position, because the Bill is not quite a financial measure or quite a temperance reform measure. It is an unfortunate blend. I believe that if the Government had gone on the question of the reduction of licences alone, they would have got all the reductions they wanted, without much objection from anybody, so long as the monopoly value was retained. It depends very much on what is put first and foremost, the temperance side or the financial side. So long as you are going to resume the monopoly value, it is impossible that any loan could be floated in time to pay off the monopoly value in the same way as it could be done if the monopoly value remained the same. I am not going to argue the principle of compensation. It is accepted in the Bill, and that being so it should be fair. The Prime Minister referred to the practice of the United States and the Colonies, and told us that in those countries licences were wiped out without compensation. But it might be pointed out that there was a great deal of difference in the stringency of the laws of the United States and the Colonies and the laws of this country. I do not, however, think there is anything in that point, because there is only one precedent for us, and that is the law of this country and the principle which lies below it, which is that in the case of any compulsory expropriation compensation shall be given, and that the compensation shall be generous. Then in regard to compensation, the Government have taken Schedule A. as its basis. But it does not take Schedule A. when it has to make money for itself, because it will go back once more to the principle of the market value. That does not seem to me quite fair. I think that the same basis ought to be applied in each case. I think that where the State is going to provide compensation it ought to be as fair as though it was going to make money for itself. I have heard it put forward many times in this House, and it is universally admitted, that the State should be a model employer. But it is not only in matters of employment that the State should be a model. The State ought also to be a model arbitrator, especially when it is going to arbitrate for its own advantage. It is said that public-houses have been under-assessed. Very likely that is true. But I think that if you want them assessed at their proper value, a very much better way would be to adopt the principle of assessment with regard to death duties; then people will feel that the assessment is on a better scale. The hon. and learned Member for the Walton Division of Liverpool referred to the question of clubs, and I must say that I thoroughly agree with him in the view he expressed that the attitude taken in this Bill in regard to clubs is not satisfactory. I think that the evidence put before the country with regard to clubs demands more consideration and more stringent legislation. I know perfectly well that when one speaks about clubs one is on rather dangerous ground, and one has to speak very carefully. But none the less, I think that there is a great deal that ought to be said. I am not in the position of the hon. Member for the Walton Division, who can take a perfectly independent line, being a Member of the Conservative Party, which does not believe very strongly, if indeed at all, in the reduction of licences, or that the reduction of facilities will have much effect on drunkenness in the country. I am one of those who stand in a different position. I do believe that the growth of a certain kind of club is becoming a very great menace and danger to the State. I believe it is a perfectly well known fact that since this Bill was introduced nearly every brewing company in a populous city has been approached by people who wish to have clubs financed. It is clear, therefore, that in the estimation of a great many people the safeguards provided in this Bill are not sufficient. We have been told that Amendments will be welcomed. I think it is very regrettable that those extra safeguards were not inserted by the Government on its own authority. Certainly, I do not see clear enough provisions in this Bill to show that the entertainments which are held at clubs are going to be suppressed. Too much, to my mind, is left to the licensing magistrates. There are, of course, very good clubs. We have got some in my own constituency—some of them I know perfectly well—that are very well conducted. They do not have those entertainments which are becoming a subject of scandal. The whole problem of the danger which I wish to point out is connected with affiliation. If you look at the advertisements in the paper called *Club Life*, it is always the point of affiliation which is mentioned, and for my part, if you are a member of a well-conducted club, I cannot see why you should want to give the run of your rooms to 1,250 other clubs. I think that if the Government were to drop some of these minor precautions which are calculated to vex well-conducted clubs and would deal with the great problem of affiliation, which is the great danger, they would be doing very much more good in regard to clubs than by the present proposals. You have at some of these clubs what is practically a music hall entertainment; or, if a club is in proximity to the ground where there is a football match, the advertisement which appears in the papers is accompanied by the suggestion that "affiliated members will be welcome." From the frequency of that statement I cannot help feeling that this is an invitation to drink upon unlicensed premises. The Under-Secretary for the Home Department told us last night that every public-house was an advertisement of drink. I want to point out also that every ill-regulated club is a secret opportunity to drink, and if you are going to have drink you might just as well have it as much as possible on licensed premises under proper control. After all, those who live in small towns know that the man who goes too often to the public-house becomes a marked man in his community, but if he goes into a club many more times than into a public-house he is not noticed at all. For these reasons I hope that some more practical steps will be taken—steps which will not at all damage clubs which exist for social intercourse, but which will prevent the creation of unlicensed public-houses. I have spoken with very great plainness this afternoon; I stand in the unusual position that in this matter I do not see eye to eye with the rest of my party, with which I am very ardently in general sympathy. I regret the position which I have to take, but I think that it is best to state the facts. I recognise, we all do, of course, that there are great clauses in this Bill, but I rely upon the Government taking a little more upon its own shoulders and leaving less on the shoulders of the magistrates. I noticed a sign of that last night. The Under-Secretary, in reference to the barmaids, suggested that to prevent hardship there should be devised some form of certificate to be given to ante-1908 barmaids. I would do nothing to disparage a sex which I revere, but I fear that, ten years hence, the ante-1908 barmaids will not be very anxious to show their certificates. I sincerely hope that the Prime Minister will introduce some clauses into this Bill which will make it more just as a piece of finance, and more adequate as a measure of temperance reform.

MR. JAMES PARKER (Halifax): I have been surprised by the amount of attention that has been paid to the financial aspect of the measure and by the small amount of attention which has been paid to the question of temperance reform. I give to the Bill in its general character whatever support is possible by my vote and voice both inside of this House and outside. I do not, however, take exactly the same point of view with regard to some of the clauses of the Bill which many Members take. I believe that the restriction of the number of licences does tend to reduce drunkenness, despite the recent statement of the hon. and learned Member for the Walton Division that there are no statistics to prove that fact. But we know that there are statistics which at least prove that the convictions for drunkenness have been materially reduced since the Act of 1904 was brought into operation. I want however this afternoon to deal with the other portion of the Bill, which I support right through to the end, though I trust that some arrangement will be made whereby it will be possible for those who hold a different position to be able to support the Bill right through the whole of the clauses. What are the facts with respect to the drinking clubs of this country? We have had a very graphic picture drawn of wicked Radical clubs. I know all kinds of working-men's clubs. I know working-men's clubs which are a disgrace to their name, and I know working-men's clubs which have been of real benefit to temperance. I should like briefly to quote from the balance-sheet of the largest working-men's club in England and possibly in the world. The town of which I am one of the representatives is probably one of the largest club towns in the United Kingdom, and I think it will be true to say that the statistics of drunkenness in that town would bear favourable comparison with those of any manufacturing town of similar size. Now in this one club to which I refer there are 10,986 members. It is not an ordinary working-men's club purely for social purposes—I want to be quite fair—but it is a club where drink is sold. I want to use it as an illustration to show how the clauses in this Bill relating to clubs will affect a club of the character of that to which I am referring. With a membership of 10,986, it has an average attendance of from 600 to 1,000 every night at various meetings. The total takings at the bar amount to £2,086 7s. 7½d., a year, and of that amount, the secretary informs me, one-third was for food and for temperance drinks, tobacco and cigars. Therefore, if you take the figures that are left, some £1,300, the average is 1¾d. a week taken over the whole membership of the institution. That is perhaps one of the best clubs. It is only open for six days a week and for fewer hours than the public-house. To that kind of club some of the clauses of this Bill will be somewhat irksome. There are possibly twenty or thirty, probably more, trade union branches meeting there night by night, and a large number of friendly societies and secret Orders such as the Oddfellows, Foresters, and Gardeners. As the Bill stands at present, a policeman can go into the lodge-room and inspect these men. That would be a real hardship. I, though not an abstainer, am willing to do all that lies in my power to promote temperance. I know what the evils of drunkenness are from past experience. I have been in the trade and know it from both sides. Let us for a moment note how this police inspection will affect clubs. By this measure obviously we want to prevent the bogus club, the purely drinking club, from continuing its existence. Are we going to do that by police inspection? The police have had every opportunity under the existing law to close scores of public-houses that certainly ought not to have existed. We want inspection of clubs, but inspection of another order entirely. We want inspection by some person who can look at the balance-sheet and see whether it is being conducted merely for the purpose of drinking. It is no advantage to send a policeman, who finds a drunken man on the premises and declares that the club should be closed. You want something more. I take it that those of us who are genuinely in support of the Bill want to prevent a club being established where a brewer has one of his houses closed. How far can we effect that by anything in the Bill? It would be possible, I submit, to introduce a provision that where any facility for drinking is taken away, within an area to be prescribed no further facilities should be laid down. That would be a distinct advantage as compared with the clauses of the Bill. Then there is the question of objection. As the Bill stands any man can object to the renewal of registration. If we had the right kind of inspecting officer—we suggest an Inland Revenue officer, a supervisor or exciseman who has undergone a Civil Service examination and would understand from the club accounts whether it was serving its purpose—he would be the person to object. But it is a wrong thing entirely to give power to any Tom, Dick or Harry to lay an objection gainst a club. It may be a man who has been turned out, and he may do it for spite. There is nothing to be gained by leaving that clause as it stands if we desire to assist the *bona fide* club and to put down the bogus club. The clause which deals with the question of the sale of liquor off, as it stands, is not in any way a temperance clause. Then, I think, the penalty is too high, and I have no doubt that in Committee that will be remedied. It may seem peculiar support of the Bill to criticise these clauses in relation to clubs, but I am prepared to vote for any measure which will do away with bogus clubs. We want a clause in this Bill which will absolutely prohibit a club which is tied to a brewery. That kind of club should go at once. Every member who desires to see the ideal club established will be prepared to vote against that kind of thing. I believe the working men's clubs will be the first to agree that the club that is tied to a brewer should go by the board. I say, as one who has served some portion of his life behind the bar of a public-house, and who has gone to public-houses right from boyhood, that it is high time this House, whatever may be the financial proposals, should tackle this question of the excessive drinking habits of the people. Go into the slums of our large cities where you see drunkenness at its worst, not always because of the quantity consumed, but because the people have no food in their stomachs, and buy drink with their last shillings and coppers, and are drunk almost before they start to take it. In addition to that, the Return issued by the Home Secretary a few days ago contains evidence as to women and children who have been watched to enter public-houses—thousands of children under five years of age. That should be sufficient to induce any man who desires the good of his country to vote for a Bill of this character. As to the justice of the time-limit I hope the Government will stand firm. Fourteen years is ample. That which the people have given through their representatives in this House to the big brewing companies or to the licensees, the people have a perfect right to take away. The brewer has never paid for it. The licence-holder has never paid for it. All that he has paid for has been the value of his licence. And as for the widow and orphan, since this Bill came in, I have heard of more widows than I knew lived. The poor widow, so-called, who has her investment in breweries was robbed long before this Bill was introduced. I had offered to me some time ago £1 brewery shares for 1s. 6d. a share. Where had the 18s. 6d. gone? Certainly this Licensing Bill had not robbed the poor widows who were shareholders. The Bill would lose much of its value if the Government compromised this question of a time-limit and extended it long above the fourteen years. I support the Bill because I believe it to be an equitable Bill to the brewery shareholders, and in the main to be a measure which will assist in promoting temperance. But I believe that before we can thoroughly deal with this traffic we shall have to do something more than improve our licensing laws. We shall have to go down to the root of the problem, and probably the State will have itself to assume the management and control in the days that are coming before we can deal with the traffic.

*MR. WHITBREAD (Huntingdonshire, Huntingdon): Almost at the close of the second day's debate on the Second Reading of this Bill, I think we have arrived at this position, that whatever gain this Bill may achieve for the cause of temperance is a matter largely of opinion, and, at all events, of uncertainty. It will depend upon the experience of years to come, and its value will be appraised by the verdict of persons other than those who are engaged in the debate to-night. Another thing that is certain is that this is a measure, not only for the purpose of promoting temperance, but one of a very drastic and far-reaching financial nature. It is a measure aimed and directed, I think, avowedly—after the speeches from the Front Bench yesterday—against not only a single trade but a single portion of that trade. The speech of the Prime Minister yesterday went very far in that direction, and the Under-Secretary for the Home Office, if I may venture to say so, like an Eastern Mullah raising recruits for a holy war, carried his operations into the enemy's camp, and assured the House that he had discovered that the rascals were actually laying by reserve funds. I should have thought that a brewing company who had had the forethought and the means—instead of distributing a large amount of profit by way of dividend—to lay a certain amount of their profit to a reserve fund, would have come rather within the category, indicated by the Prime Minister, of the trader who had conducted his business in a prudent manner, and would be such a man as would deserve the favourable consideration of the Government in considering his financial position as affected by this Bill. But, if I understood the Under-Secretary for the Home Office aright, he rather seemed to indicate that the possession of a reserve fund was an additional reason for dealing in a drastic manner with the trader in question. That was the impression that was conveyed to my mind. This Bill will affect a single trade which has been described by the Prime Minister as a lawful trade, a trade recognised by the Legislature, and a trade investors in which are entitled to the same amount of protection and security at the hands of Parliament as the investors in any other commercial undertaking. The Prime Minister's words were quoted yesterday, and I will not quote them again to their full extent, but he said, speaking to a deputation which approached him in November last—

> "Speaking for my colleagues as well as for myself, so far as we are concerned we shall certainly bring forward no proposals which will have the tendency or the effect—"

of which the deputation complained. When those words were quoted the Prime Minister intervened and said he had added a further sentence. That is quite true. Having stated, with emphasis, that the Government would not bring forward legislation which would have a confiscatory effect on the trade, he went on to say—

> "I say this, however, without prejudice to the question, where I have no doubt that a great difference of opinion will exist, as to the precise point where interference ends and confiscatory action begins."

It is precisely from that point of view that I wish to say a few words on this Bill to-night. Does it or does it not pass the point where legitimate interference ends and confiscatory action begins? What is the position at the present time? I take the case of a brewing company of which I have some information. The existing compensation levy exacted from that company represents an amount of money practically equal to 1 per cent. dividend on their ordinary share capital—it represents the difference between a 5 per cent. and a 4 per cent. dividend. During the three years of the operation of the existing Act that company has had some fifteen houses suppressed, with compensation. As a matter of fact the amount drawn from them by way of compensation levy has been about balanced by the amount they have received as compensation for the houses suppressed; so that their position to-day is this—a certain sum of money has been taken from one pocket and returned to the other, and they have lost the trade of these fifteen houses. That is not a position of which I am in any way desirous of complaining or protesting against. But the process of reduction under the present Act is, according to the advocates of this Bill, too slow and requires to be quickened up, and the process by which it is proposed to quicken it up is to upset and reverse what is known as the Kennedy judgment. I am not going to discuss the inherent vice which the Prime Minister has discovered in that judgment. I may have a partial affection for it myself, because it so happens that the County Licensing Committee, of which I am the chairman, had the very problem before them about a fortnight before the judgment was pronounced, and in the absence of any authoritative guide from the Divisional Court we had to do the best we could in the matter and the decision we came to was practically the same as was afterwards laid down by Mr. Justice Kennedy, so that I think it is a sound and fair one. I only want to point out what would be the effect on the firm I have mentioned under the operations of this Bill. If the Bill passes the same amount will be drawn annually from them in the form of compensation levy, and they will get in return in respect of each house suppressed in the future a sum equal to about one-fifth of the present compensation they would receive. That in itself seems to me to approach dangerously near the point where legitimate interference ends and confiscatory action begins. [OPPOSITION cheers]. Further, under the time-limit now proposed, this compensation—inadequate as it seems to me—will tend to diminish year by year. That is to say, the houses suppressed during the first of that series of fourteen years, and which, other things being equal, are presumed to be the worst houses, will receive a larger share of the compensation than the houses suppressed in the succeeding years. The compensation, therefore, to the worst class of houses will be much greater than the compensation for the better class of houses. That in itself does not seem to be a very admirable disposition of the modified fund for compensation which is going to exist under this Bill. The compensation will dwindle down from about one-fifth of the present compensation during the first of the fourteen years until it reaches almost vanishing point in the last of the fourteen years. As years go on the inadequacy of the compensation will increase, whilst the levy extracted from the pockets of the trade will remain the same as it is to-day. The Prime Minister yesterday asked those who are in the position of opposing this Bill to give a definite answer to the question whether they admitted the principle of the time-limit. I am sorry to say that, as a matter of principle, I am not at all enamoured of it, because to me it seems to be an attempt to mortgage the action of Parliament. It seems to me to be an attempt to bind the State fourteen or twenty-one years hence to do something which everyone knows it cannot and dare not do to-day. I think that is a bad principle, but as a matter of practice I am prepared to admit that a time-limit may be a convenient and practical means of getting out of a difficulty insuperable by any other means. I will, however, proceed with my argument as to the justice and equity of this Bill. At the end of fourteen years one-third of the existing houses will have been closed under this scheme, and the remaining two-thirds, numbering 60,000 odd houses in all, are to lose their licence value and goodwill with no compensation at all. That is to say, the unfortunate investor in brewery securities is to continue for fourteen years to pay to the State 1 per cent. dividend on his ordinary shares by way of insurance and in return for that he will receive from one-fifth of the present compensation down to a vanishing sum altogether. Therefore he will part with one-third of his property during those fourteen years for quite an inadequate return, and he will lose the remaining two-thirds of his property with no return at all. Then if he survivies that point, subject to local veto—a machinery of vague and doubtful application—he will then be invited to compete at auction if he is still alive in a financial sense to recover something of what was yesterday his property, but which has since been taken over by the State. According to this Bill I believe he will have to pay the cost of the Commission which will have to sit to decide this question. I understand, however, that the provision which provides that the cost of the Commission is to be saddled upon the trade is to be mercifully removed from the provisions of the Bill. As a matter of equity the whole process resembles the cutting off of a man's legs, and then punishing him on the ground that he has no visible means of support. I think this certainly passes the point where legitimate interference can be said to end and confiscatory action begins. We were told yesterday quite rightly that there is considerable doubt and misapprehension as to what is the meaning of the term "monopoly value." If I gathered correctly the words of the Prime Minister and the Under-Secretary for the Home Office, it is proposed to confine and restrict the monopoly value, which will have to be paid for after the fourteen years time-limit expires, to a a sum which will be represented by the difference between the rateable value of the house with a licence and the house without a licence. If that is so it is of course true that that will represent a smaller burden, although it will be a serious burden, than would be the case if the lines of the Kennedy judgment were adhered to and the goodwill and the wholesale profit were included in the monopoly value. But I am a little doubtful as to whether the Government will be able to secure that the restrictions will always hold good. Let us take the case of what will happen in the future when the monopoly value is restricted by some such limits as I have indicated. It may be that the Chancellor of the Exchequer will be in want of money. Tariff reform will probably have been tried, and will have failed to come up to all that is expected of it. The Chancellor of the Exchequer will, in that case, if we may judge from experience, almost inevitably cast his eyes to that well-known beast of burden the licensed trade, and he will say: "Here is a trade paying only a small sum for a small consideration, an annual licence, which has to be applied for in order to be renewed each year," and almost inevitably it will occur to him that if the tenure of these licences were a lease of seven, fourteen, or twenty-one years, it would become a valuable and more secure property, and it is quite possible for the State to claim a certain amount of that value from the licensee. They would immediately have conferred on them an added value, and competition to obtain them would inevitably be set up. The State would then find, as it has found in the past, that it has conferred a valuable right of property upon persons who have paid inadequately to the Exchequer in return for it. So the whole vicious circle would be repeated: there would be a rush of speculation, and another measure would be brought in for the purpose of extracting more from the coffers of the trade. That is an objection which I foresee to be brought against the proposal to define the monopoly value at the end of the time-limit. I agree with the remarks which fell this afternoon from the hon. Member for Coventry in his able and forcible speech. He could not understand the meaning of the word "resume" mentioned in connection with the monopoly value, and I do not see how the State can be said to "resume" a property or right which it has never secured for itself. The foreign anarchist, when he finds an inconvenient police officer in his path, never proposes to assassinate or murder him, but passes a resolution that the officer in question is condemned to be "removed"; and in the same way the promoters of this Bill are, I think, rather squeamish in their phraseology when they talk about resuming a property, a right, which the State has never in recent history proposed to arrogate to itself. The expectation of the renewal of a licence has over and over again in our Courts been treated as a property assessable, taxable — a property the owner of which has a right to be secured in the possession of it. Take the case of the trustees of the Somers estate. In that case the Divisional Court held that the expectation of the renewal of the licence was to such an extent a property which they ought to recognise that they granted an injunction on the application of the trustees for the remainderman to restrain the tenant for life from doing an act which would have the effect of reducing the value of the licence. Reference has been made more than once in the course of the debate to a much more practical recognition of the expectancy of renewal which existed in the shape of a Return which the hon. and learned Member for the Walton Division of Liverpool has quoted—the instructions issued in 1890, signed by Sir Algernon West, who was at that time the Chairman of the Board of Inland Revenue, indicating the manner in which licensed properties were to be assessed for the purpose of death duties. It goes through the whole category of every form of interest in licensed property, and a note is appended stating that the assumption is to be made—there is no permissive nature about it—the official is instructed that the whole property is to be valued upon the assumption that the licence will continue to be renewed during the lifetime of the successor, because without a licence there can be no goodwill in the valuation of the property. That is a very definite, distinct corroboration of my contention that the State, through its officials, has always and does to-day recognise the expectancy of the licence-holder's renewal of his licence. The Prime Minister yesterday asked for the date of that document. The date is very remarkable. It is the year 1890. After the original issue of these instructions in 1891, there was pronounced the famous judgment in the case of Sharp *v.* Wakefield, which is supposed to have opened the eyes of the public for the first time to the great and indisputable fact that the licence is issued for one year, and one year only. If that judgment meant all that was claimed for it and was pronounced just one year after these instructions to the officials of the Inland Revenue Board, it was surely the duty of that board at once to cancel the instructions and instruct their officials that licences were only for one year and that property held under a licence of that kind was to be valued accordingly. But did they do so? These instructions were not withdrawn, and they continue in force to this day. In view of the long-continued consistent practice of the Inland Revenue authorities it is nothing less than a juggling with words to say that the expectation of the renewal of a licence is not a property which a man has a right to hold and in which he has a right to be confirmed and protected by the Legislature. Again, I say that in dealing with the expectation of the renewal of the licence in the manner in which this Bill proposes to deal with it, it is proposing to pass beyond the point where legitimate interference ends and confiscatory action begins. When this return was first alluded to the Prime Minister justified the proposal of the Bill by quoting as a simile the case of the owner of a racehorse, and said the value of a racehorse depends upon the probability of its winning large stakes in a race. That is an uncertain probability, and yet if it was a question of taxation the authorities would be justified in estimating its value at the highest sum it would fetch in the open market exactly in the same way as these instructions estimate the value of licensed property. But the simile is not altogether justifiable, because if the Prime Minister was dealing with a racehorse instead of licensed property I am afraid he would lie under the imputation of trying to nobble the animal—I think that is the phrase—in such a way as to prejudice his chance of winning the race or even acquiring the greater value which attaches to thoroughbred animals in their later and more luxurious years.

I now pass to another matter. What probability is there of this Bill effecting any great or material advantage in the cause of temperance? I at once freely admit that where there is a reasonable probability of any great public advantage then the rights of private individuals may be modified, and even in extreme cases disregarded. I now pass to the considerations which belong to the category of probability and conjecture. I think it is generally admitted—and it is a matter of congratulation—that during the last few years the people of this country have been advancing in sobriety. Every year the Chancellor of the Exchequer has almost reluctantly, from a financial point of view, pointed to the diminishing revenue from the sale of intoxicating liquors. From that it follows that if this Bill when it passes and becomes law is going to show any great gain for temperance, it will have to show a good deal. It will have to show that we are not only maintaining the present rate of progress in temperance but effecting a material acceleration of that rate of progress. Every speaker, and almost every writer, who has dealt with this question has been driven to admit that there is no real correspondence between the figures of the diminution of drunkenness in the country and the reduction of licences. It is quite easy to set up one set of figures which will show that the reduction of licences has produced a great and immediate gain to temperance, but immediately afterwards another set of figures, equally reliable, will show that in another part of the country exactly the reverse had followed. That is only another case where figures supply brilliant illustrations, but are quite brittle and unreliable when used as a matter of argument. I think that for the first time during the debate, attention has been called to the regulation of clubs. I do not want to quote any more or less comical advertisements which are issued by these clubs, although I have a copy of the journal referred to. It would be comical, if it were not rather pathetic, to notice the attractions which are almost universally held out to induce persons to visit these clubs, during the hours which ought to be devoted to divine service of some sort or another. I strongly support the hon. Members who have emphasised the fact that unless the unrestricted hours and opportunities for the consumption of alcoholic drink in these increasingly numerous clubs are much more drastically dealt with than at present under this Bill, it is a mere farce to pretend that you are going to achieve any great advance towards temperance by merely adding further burdens on carefully supervised public-houses. The Government have announced that they are open to consider Amendments upon the club clauses, but I am afraid that they are likely to be pressed, and quite as strongly and effectively pressed, to consider Amendments from the point of view of those who wish to increase these clubs as from those who wish more drastic and firmer regulations. At any rate, I can find no solid ground in the provisions of this Bill to assure me that the gain which it will promote to the cause of temperance is in any way sufficient and sufficiently certain to warrant what I consider the unduly drastic provisions that it proposes to impose on the owners of licensed property. I have one other objection to the Bill, and that is the objection which has already been pointed out, viz., that this Bill is hailed from one quarter of the House, not for what it does or proposes to do in the direction of temperance reform, but as a first and important step in that Socialist policy of acquiring without compensation the means of production and distribution throughout the country. Hitherto, the advocacy of such a policy has been left to the less responsible Members of this House, but I cannot regard, with anything like confidence, a measure promoted by the Government of the day, which is so graphically characterised by an hon. Member who writes that—

> "On the whole this Bill is one which Socialists may welcome, not so much for what it will do immediately, but as to the future possibilities it opens out in the direction of the policy which they advocate."

Upon these grounds I regret—and seriously regret—to find myself unable to vote for the Second Reading of the Bill. I am one of those who would be very glad—I would sacrifice a great deal to see placed on the Statute-book a measure which was just and equitable in its provisions and would tend to some permanent settlement of a question which has been too long unsettled. If in the course of its progress through Committee this Bill is remodelled and altered in the directions I have attempted to indicate, I should be very glad to be able to support it on the Third Reading. I am sure the Prime Minister will not refuse to believe me when I say that it is a matter of sincere regret to me not to be able to follow him through the Lobby on the first of what I trust will be many occasions when he will lead a majority of the House in a division during this Parliament. But holding as I do the view that this measure will inflict undeserved injustice on a large number of persons in this country without securing any adequate gain to the cause of temperance, I am reluctantly obliged to oppose its Second Reading.

MR. CAMERON CORBETT (Glasgow, Tradeston): An hon. Member on the other side of the House objected to our bringing into this discussion any analogies from different parts of the world, as to the treatment of expectation of renewal. But it seems to me that we may get rid of a great many ambiguities if we review all analogies as to expectation of renewal from whatever quarter they come. In the United States we have it on the authority of the Blue-book that in no single case in any State has any compensation been granted for non-renewal of a licence, nor has any time-limit been given to the existence of the licence. In no province in the Dominion of Canada where licences have been legislated upon has any time-limit been given nor compensation awarded. In the European States the same policy has been followed. In Norway and Sweden, when a change was made in the licensing system to public control or local veto, there was no time-limit or compensation awarded to the then holders of licences. In France, in the time of Napoleon III., a great reduction was made in the number of licences without a time-limit or compensation. In Russia the system of licences was swept away in favour of the nationalisation of the liquor traffic, but there, too, there was no time-limit or compensation, the theory being that licences were granted for one year and one year only. The licensee got the benefit where renewal took place and the disadvantage when the licence was taken away. It is true that in certain Australian Colonies a time-notice was given, but in no part of the world has more generous consideration been shown for the expectation of renewal than the fourteen years time-limit given in this Bill. Attempts have been made to prove that this is unfair treatment; that you do not take away the property of the landlords at the end of fourteen years. But in the case of land the only expectation of renewal is the landlord's expectation, not the tenant's. I happen to have the happiest relations with the tenants on the Rowallan estate, where they and their families have been in occupancy of holdings for 400 years. But none of these tenants maintain that there is any right as against the landlord to a freehold interest in their farms because of an expectation of a renewal of their tenancy. I look to the possibilities of this measure from the temperance point of view. I say no word against those who are opposed to the Bill. I believe that they act as sincerely as I do in supporting it. All the agencies throughout the country, whether Church of England or Nonconformist, whether mainly Liberal or mainly Conservative, in favour of temperance, believe that this Bill will materially assist their efforts in that cause. Attempts have been made to show that legislative efforts would not materially assist the cause of temperance. Anybody who knows Scotland is aware that Sunday closing has largely diminished drunkenness. Attempts have been made in England to discredit Sunday closing, but they are not made in Scotland. In no part of Scotland is there any belief in that. English newspapers sometimes say that in Glasgow Sunday is the most drunken day of the week, but if the statistics are taken from eight o'clock on Sunday morning to eight o'clock on Monday morning so as to clear responsibility for the Saturday night drinking, it is found that drunkenness on Sunday is only one-sixtieth part of the drunkenness during the whole week, and instead of Sunday being the most drunken day in the week it has now only a tenth of the average drunkenness of any other day in the week. I wish to deal with what has been tried elsewhere. This measure, after the end of fourteen years, does open up splendid possibilities, and in the United States of America and our own Colonies wherever public control in the form of local veto has been tried the people increasingly believe in its effect. At the beginning of last year 33,000,000 people in the United States were under prohibition; at the beginning of this year the number had increased to 36,000,000. Then during this last month there have been fresh votes taken in the United States, and what has been the result? In five States 2,500 contests have resulted in 2,000,000 of additional population being brought under prohibition. Why is it that the people of the United States go on increasingly adding area to area under their prohibition law? I do not want to go into the matter fully to-night, but I have reports from the great majority of governors of the States where these experiments have been tried throughout the United States: I want to take the most difficult cases. We are constantly told that it is easy to carry out prohibition in country districts or among village populations, but that it is very hard to carry out the system in large populations. I have information as to four cities of the United States, with 100,000 population and over, which have tried this experiment. With reference to Atalanta, I was not able to get much official information, but all that I have is favourable. I sent a telegram to the Chief Constable, to which I received an answer yesterday, inquiring if prohibition, which had been introduced at the beginning of the year, had diminished crime, and the reply that I received was "Yes." With reference to Kansas City, we have more definite information. At the beginning of last year an interview with the Chief Constable of Kansas City was published in the newspapers, to the effect that crime had been reduced, by doing away with liquor-shops, by one-half. At Birmingham, Alabama, where prohibition has been in force since the beginning of this year, I wrote to the Chief Constable, and I have a letter from him, in which he says that crime has been reduced there by 50 per cent. I come to the other of the four cities, Cambridge. There the facts with regard to the reduction of crime are very much the same as in the other cases, but as it has had prohibition for over twenty years the Chief Constable deals more largely with the matter. What strikes him most, he says, is the increased expenditure on food, clothing, and shoes, and he remarks that the change in the condition of the people is especially marked among the poorest classes of the community. Now, I would ask, does this system really interfere with the freedom of individuals? I maintain that it does not. I maintain that the freedom of the individual implies his freedom to do wrong as well as his freedom to do right, but that the freedom that you have to conceive is the freedom of the man's permanent purpose and fixed intention. If any man in a prohibition State wants to drink whisky or beer or wine he can do it. They perfectly well know how to manage it, but if that is their purpose they are resolved to do it. But, on the other hand, if a man wishes not to do this thing, if he is one of the men who have a difficulty in passing a public-house, and who would prefer to be an abstainer, that man's permanent freedom is also respected, and his permanent purpose is carried out, and it is just as much carried out because these restrictions tell against the individual. Where you have this prohibition you have a great reduction in the consumption of alcohol and a great reduction in criminality. I know we are told that in the United States the consumption of alcohol has gone on increasing, but our Returns as regards that are not very recent. I have, however, very recent information from the leading liquor papers in the United States, and they describe the loss which has been brought about by prohibition. They enumerate all the trades dealt with and all the industries connected with the production of alcohol, and everything connected with the trade, and they say, that the loss is almost incalculable, and if that almost incalculable loss falls upon those engaged in producing liquor, and in barrelling and bottling it, and in its transit, there must be a diminution in the amount of liquor consumed. I, for one, while I do not judge any of those who differ from me on this occasion, do feel that this is the most important issue with which this House has had to do for many a long day. We have to deal with the question of moral influence which touches most pressingly the interests of our people, and when we look back in days to come we shall look with satisfaction on everything that we did in helping to pass this Bill.

*MR. GEORGE FABER (York): The speech of the Prime Minister yesterday afternoon might have marked a new departure. Since the Prime Minister, or the Chancellor of the Exchequer as he was then, introduced this measure, much has happened, and we, at any rate on this side of the House, were waiting to know yesterday whether it was to be a case of return to the older and sounder policy or whether the Prime Minister intended to continue the course which, as Chancellor of the Exchequer, he followed when he introduced this measure. I am only a humble Member of Parliament, and I am no master of tactics, but I do not know whether the tone adopted by the Prime Minister yesterday indicated what he felt about this measure, or whether he desired to put new heart into his supporters. One sentence that he let drop certainly indicated one or the other, because he said, towards the conclusion of his speech, in his eloquent peroration, that the trade would find that they were living in a fools' paradise if they thought they were going to conquer in this matter. Well, Sir, it is very unsafe for anyone to prophesy unless he knows, and whether upon the conclusion of this matter it will be the trade which will be in a fools' paradise, or whether it will be the Government, remains for the future and the future alone to judge. The Prime Minister may have forgotten the prophetic and ominous words of the late Sir William Harcourt upon his introduction of the Local Veto Bill in 1893. He said—

> "The Government are not unaware that in navigating this sea they are navigating an ocean that is covered with many wrecks."

And the right hon. Gentleman by his own measure added another wreck to the number. Members who were in the House at that time will recollect that that ship sank as soon as it was launched, and never reached the open sea at all; it never got beyond the First Reading. But what about this vessel in which the Prime Minister put out to sea yesterday afternoon? Almost as soon as it got there the hon. and learned Member for the Kingston Division fired a shot at it which struck it straight amidships in such a way that I do not imagine the vessel will ever recover from that drastic operation. Already it is drifting more or less waterlogged, and, as far as I can see, it looks as if it will go to pieces on the ruthless rocks of public opinion. The reason is because it is certainly not a just measure, and from my point of view it certainly is not a temperance measure. You are going to reduce the licences by 30,000 in the next fourteen years, but it has been proved over and over again in the course of the debate yesterday and to-day that if you do that you do not necessarily lessen the amount of drunkenness, because the conditions of the times have become so complex that there is no longer only one place to drink in, viz., the public-house, but there is the club and the home which is supplied through various channels. There are avenues of drink everywhere, and if you reduce the number of public-houses you are only going to open the door in other directions. Hon. Members on the opposite side of the House are never tired of saying that the democracy must govern, and yet you propose to interfere with the social life of the democracy in a matter in which they have not been consulted, and which deeply touches its liberties. You intend to make a large reduction in the number of public-houses, but you do not propose in any way to deal with the question of clubs. You are of course entitled to think that the reduction of public-houses in this country will reduce the consumption of drink, but if you want to reduce the number of licences why do you not pay for those which you reduce? And here I have the authority of one of the greatest Parliamentarians who ever adorned this Chamber. I have the authority of no less a potent person than the late Mr. Gladstone. What view did the late Mr. Gladstone take of this matter on the Liquor Bill brought forward in 1880? On the introduction of that Bill Mr. Gladstone said—

> "We ought not to allow our prejudices with regard to this particular trade . . . . to cause us to deviate by one hair's breadth from the principles on which Parliament has always acted in analogous circumstances, namely, that when a vested interest has been allowed to grow up the question of compensation should be considered when such vested interests were proposed to be interfered with by Parliament. What I am prepared to say is this, that the licensed victualler has the same right to fair consideration that is enjoyed by persons following every other trade or calling which is interfered with by Act of Parliament, and to whom compensation is awarded owing to such interference. . . . . When Parliament enacted negro emancipation it was preceded by a preliminary Resolution in which the principle of compensation was recognised."

Later Mr. Gladstone said—

> "The withdrawal of the licence is the confiscation of the estate."

Upon the next stage of the measure the right hon. Gentleman spoke in no less strong terms. He said—

> "I should have been better pleased with the matter of the Resolution, if my hon. friend had included in it some reference to the principle of equitable compensation . . . I want a frank recognition of the principle that we are not to deny to publicans as a class the benefits of equal treatment. . . . Considering the legislative title they have acquired, and the recognition of their position in the proceedings of this House for a long series of years, they ought not to be placed at a disadvantage on account of the particular impression we may entertain—in many cases too justly—in relation to the mischief connected with the present licensing system."

Many years have passed since those words were spoken by that eminent gentleman. I do not know whether the Radical Party still sit at his feet.

> "Imperial Caesar, dead and turned to clay,
> May stop a hole to keep the wind away."

But, if "he being dead yet speaketh," the whole ground of your so-called compensation falls from under your feet. Look at the whole course of the procedure that has been followed. Look at it as sensible men. The State for generations has not only recognised the trade, but patted it on the back. The drink bill of this country is something like £160,000,000 a year. Out of that the State is taking one-fourth. It is taking nearly £40,000,000 in excise alone, and if everything, including income-tax and death duties is taken into consideration, I should not be surprised to find the State takes between £50,000,000 and £60,000,000 a year from the trade. The State is almost a partner in the business. It has put in no capital, but takes the greater part of the profit out. It is under the shadow, under the authority, of the State that this trade has attained the honourable position it holds to-day; an honourable trade conducted by honourable men. I speak without any interest in it. I am not a brewer—I should not be ashamed if I were—but as a banker I am able to see that this is the first step down that long lane which leads to ruin. This trade has grown up under the wing of the State. The State has taxed it, and the local authorities have rated it, as if it were an enduring property, not as if the licence lasted for one year. It is treated almost as a freehold. I think the instructions issued by the Chancellor of the Exchequer of the day to the Inland Revenue authorities are absolutely conclusive evidence in themselves that the State considered the licences as an enduring property. It is absolutely impossible for the State now to turn round after all that has happened, and after all the money that has been put into the trade by individuals, and taken out of it by the State, and say that licences are not an enduring property; that they only last for a year, and can be taken away at the whim and pleasure of the State. The State, local authorities, the magistrates, and the Law Courts, have all treated them as an enduring property—liable, of course, to be taken away for bad behaviour, but, excepting in cases of proved superfluity, not otherwise. It was because Mr. Gladstone saw this so clearly that he took the view he did in 1880, because he saw the State had put itself into such a position in regard to licences by the course it had pursued, that it could not turn round and say there was no property in them. The State is not a pettyfogging attorney to take advantage of any quibble, of any hole, that it can find in the logic of the position. The position of the State ought to be a position of integrity and fair dealing. This is not a Bill to promote morals, it is a Bill to get money. The President of the Board of Education, it seems to me, let that out in a recent speech at Dewsbury. I doubt, however, if the Government have even concealed it from themselves. First and foremost this is a Bill for getting money. What did the President of the Board of Education say? He said this Bill would be very convenient for old-age pensions. Have we really come to the stage when we are going to rob Peter to pay Paul; to take money from tens of thousands of shareholders in brewery companies and licensed victuallers, in order to promote old-age pensions? The Government, as a matter of fact, are out of elbows; they have made promises they have not the money to carry out, and in order to carry out those promises are endeavouring to seize the first Naboth's vineyard they can find, namely, the licensed trade of this country.

MR. LUPTON (Lincolnshire, Sleaford): The hon. Member admits that the trade collects £160,000,000 from the people, and hands over £40,000,000 to the State. I would ask him, Would it not be better for the State to collect the £40,000,000 direct, and leave the remaining £120,000,000 in the pockets of the people?

*MR. GEORGE FABER: I do not quite follow the hon. Member. Does he suggest that there should be total prohibition?

MR. LUPTON: I suggest that the people would be better off if the trade did not collect this £120,000,000 from them.

*MR. GEORGE FABER: What I complain of is that at the end of fourteen years the State is going to appropriate all licenses without paying anything for them. It is not only going to collect the £40,000,000 *in exciso*, but is going to be the master of the licensed trade and perhaps take every farthing of the profit. [Cries of "No."] Hon. Members cry "No," but at the end of fourteen years the State will recover the monopoly value of the whole trade to do with the licences exactly what it pleases. The State may, and I think will, reap the entire profit of the trade. Nobody imagines there is going to be prohibition. This is simply a Money Bill, a money device. The Bill from that point of view is artfully drawn. It is drawn so as to meet the views of temperance reformers in this respect, that during the next fourteen years 30,000 licences are to be abolished. That is to catch the bishops and the temperance party. At the end of fourteen years the State is to recover the monopoly value. This Bill is to put money into the pockets of the Treasury. As regards the first part of the proposition, namely, a wholesale reduction of licences during the next fourteen years, where do the Government find any warrant for the proposition? Certainly it is not in Sharpe *v.* Wakefield. All that that case laid down was that the magistrates in a particular case, having considered all the circumstances of the case, might suppress a particular licence. Sharpe *v.* Wakefield never contemplated the wholesale reduction of licences. What Lord Hannen said was that each case must be considered on its merits, and Lord Halsbury said the matter must be decided according to law and not according to humour. When you take away 30,000 licences in the next fourteen years is that treating the matter judicially?

And, it being a quarter past Eight of the clock, further proceeding was postponed without Question put, pursuant to Standing Order No. 4.

EAST INDIA (EDUCATION).

*MR. LAIDLAW (Renfrewshire, E.), in calling attention to the present educational conditions in India and moving "That the time has come for an impartial and searching inquiry into the scope, character, and methods of education in India," said that he did not propose, in moving that Resolution, to occupy the time of the House at any great length. If he were bringing forward a Resolution for the adoption of any great change in our educational system in India it would be incumbent upon him to bring forward facts and figures in support of any argument he might advance. But he was not doing that; he was simply calling for an inquiry, and in doing that he should represent to the House the feelings and opinions of a large number of people who were interested in this question, and who were able to judge of the merits of the present system. But before proceeding he would like to congratulate the Secretary of State for India on having appointed, last year, a Committee to look after the interests of the Indian students who came to this country to complete their studies. That Committee, he understood, had now completed its labours, and he trusted that in the more serene atmosphere of another place, the noble Lord the Secretary of State would make some pronouncement as to what was to be done in regard to the recommendations made by that Committee. During a long residence in India, and during a recent visit, he had talked with all sorts and conditions of people in regard to this great question, and he had not found anyone who approved of our present methods in any branch of education in that country, and the results of this lay at the root of much of the discontent and unrest which unhappily prevailed in some parts of India at the present moment. He was not able to-day to propose a remedy. When it came to questions of reform, he had the authority of no less a personage than Sir Theodore Morrison for saying that there were as many views with regard to what should be done, as there were people engaged in the Educational Department of India. What was wanted was a thorough and impartial investigation. There had been no general inquiry with regard to our educational methods in India since the Royal Commission in 1882, and during the twenty-six years which had since elapsed he was sure that everyone would agree that more changes had taken place in India than in all the past 200 years during which we had been associated with that country. It was high time that we had another independent investigation. What he contended was required at this time was an impartial investigation. He would deprecate an inquiry by any of those estimable gentlemen who were connected with the working of the educational machinery in India. They were liable to be somewhat prejudiced, and somewhat Conservative. They were likely to be somewhat opposed to change, and what was wanted was that some fresh minds should be brought to bear on the subject. He would like investigations to begin with an inquiry into the scope of our educational work. They were all aware that the Indian Government for some years had pronounced most emphatically in favour of further elementary education. The Indian Government had been looking towards that for some years, and they continued to look in that direction without making any real progress towards that object. He would like to quote Lord Curzon with regard to the position of the Government of India. In a speech which he made shortly after he went to India in 1901, in connection with an education Conference at Simla, he said—

> "Primary education, by which I understand the teaching of the masses in the vernacular, opens a wide and a very contested field of study. I am one of those who think that the Government has not fulfilled its duty in this respect."

Then after giving some reasons, the lack of vernacular literature being one reason, Lord Curzon went on to say—

> "My second reason is even wider in its application. What is the greatest danger to India. What is the source of superstition, outbreaks of crime, yes, also of much agrarian discontent and suffering among the masses? It is ignorance. And what is the only antidote to ignorance? Knowledge. And in proportion as we teach the masses so shall we make their lot happier, and in proportion as they are happier so will they become more useful members of the body politic."

We were proud of what we had done in India in bygone generations, but it was very sad to find that not more than one-sixth of the boys of school age and a very much smaller proportion of the girls were yet in school. There were only 98 per 1,000 of the male natives of India and 7 per 1,000 of the female natives who could read the vernacular. Then the amount of money spent upon education in India was deplorably inadequate. It worked out at 1½d. per head of the children of school age. He would be out of order if he suggested any special means of raising funds, but there was a widespread feeling, not only in this country but also in India, that what we were spending on our military defences in India was altogether out of proportion to what we were spending on education. Personally, he very strongly supported that view. He held that there was no necessity to-day for the large military expenditure being maintained at the point at which it stood thirty years ago. He did not base that opinion so much upon our good relations with our neighbours as upon the fact that communication was very much easier now and that it only took days where formerly it took weeks to transport troops from outlying and southern districts to the North-West frontier. He thought the Government would do well to consider the question of reducing the military expenditure in India as soon as possible and of applying what was saved to the cause of elementary education. He was told when he was at Calcutta a short time ago by a very high authority that a special tax for education would be popular, and he was sure that that would be so in some of the provinces. This question of primary education alone justified them in asking for an inquiry as to existing methods and how far they could be improved. When they came to the question of secondary and higher education, there was a diversity of view as to what should be done. It was universally held that our present method was not the best, and that there was vast room for improvement; they were driven to that conclusion by results. The Government and some of the great missionary societies had done a great deal for higher education. They had vied with each other in providing this at very low cost to those ready and willing to receive it. The result had been that a large number of men had gone through the colleges and taken university degrees and were now suffering from the kind of education that had been given them, and a great many of them could see for themselves that the course of training they had undergone had not been such as fitted them for such careers as were open to them. It had been a great deal too literary. They had memorised a great deal of English classical literature, and had gone through numerous examinations. Their whole training had not been sufficiently scientific and practical, and the result was that there were to-day crowds of educated men who looked to those who had provided their education to provide them practically with a career, and with everything else in life, instead of looking to themselves to develop the great resources of the country. These resources as it was were being left to be exploited by people who had no special or permanent connection with or interest in the country. That was not as it should be. Everybody in India was agreed upon that. But when it came to a question of a remedy, there was great diversity of opinion, and for that reason he, for one, was not prepared to make any suggestion; it would be exceedingly foolish in view of the manifold variety of opinion to dogmatise at all with regard to any particular remedy. The whole system of education all the way through was being starved for want of money. That was the root of the whole evil. There was an altogether inadequate supply of teachers, and they did not always get the very best material because the inducements offered did not attract talent to the profession. Then they were lacking in training colleges. If they had training colleges, and offered better inducements, things would very speedily improve in that respect. The fact of the matter was that the whole system was starved, and the Government of India should resolutely face the question of providing in a very much more liberal manner than they had done hitherto for this great work. He would not like to say—there would, perhaps, be no justification for saying—that the domiciled community had not received their due share of educational facilities compared with what was spent upon the natives, but they saw that in that connection in regard to the money devoted to the education of the domiciled community how painfully inadequate the amount was. These people, especially the Eurasians, were in an exceedingly difficult position. There was no scope for them amongst the labouring classes, and even the most incompetent amongst them, without a fairly good education which would enable them to take a clerkship, or something of that kind, were in an exceedingly difficult and deplorable condition, and the demand for some better provision for their education and uplift was very strongly called for. Referring again to the discontent and unrest that prevailed in some parts of the country, in making inquiries he found it was very largely a schoolboy agitation. They had set their hands to the plough and must not look back. A great deal of the trouble arose from the fact that these lads were half-educated. The kind of education they had received had not been on the right lines, and they must remember that a little knowledge was a dangerous thing. We were not in India by chance or for what we could get out of the country. We were there for the uplifting of the people. He sometimes thought it would be one of the best things we could do for that country greatly to enlarge the facilities for adequate and proper education on the right lines. A few years ago a popular soldier was sent to India with practically a free hand to spend ten millions of money in making a new redistribution of the troops. He wished they could send an educational expert and enthusiast to India with a free hand to spend not £10,000,000, but £20,000,000 or £30,000 000 during the next ten years. That would be one of the finest things —it would make those ten years the best and the work done would redound more to our credit in connection with our relations with India than anything during our past connection. He had not come forward with any suggestion of his own with regard to a remedy. He had no change to propose at this stage. All he asked was that there should be an impartial inquiry as to the scope, character, and methods of our educational system in India. He begged to move.

MR. HART-DAVIES (Hackney, N.) in seconding the Resolution, said how very much they regretted that the new Under-Secretary for India was not present. He was sure he would wish to have been there, and made his first appearance as representative of India on a question so extremely far-reaching and important as this. He was quite sure, from the Imperial point of view, it was an extremely important question. He took a peculiar interest in it because some years ago he was at the head of the Education Department in a large though rather backward province in India, and he remembered how very much they were handicapped, by want not only of funds, but of any determinate plans, so to speak, on which education was being carried on. There was no doubt our educational position in India was profoundly unsatisfactory for various reasons, as to both quantity and quality. We spent on education in India with its population of 250,000,000 only about £3,000,000. Compared with the expenditure on education in England that was ludicrous. Fees accounted for about £1,000,000 of that, £1,500,000 were derived from provincial, municipal, and local funds, and the rest was provided by the Government of India. That was an absurdly small amount to spend on a huge country like India where education was extremely valued. There was no want of enthusiasm for education in India. It was only the want of money that prevented the development of education. That was a most deplorable thing, and it reflected a certain amount of discredit on us as a ruling race in India that we spent so much money on fortifications on the North-West against a purely imaginary danger. When he remembered that we might have spent all that money on education, he was not exactly proud of the Government of India. As regarded primary education he thought there should be in every village a primary school, and that education should be free, and they ought to have in as many places as possible a secondary school. Education was perhaps more important in India than in any other country in the world. He had a great deal to do at one time with a certain department which had to deal with agricultural indebtedness. Agriculture was the principal industry of India, and one of the principal reasons of the distress of agriculturists was that they were in a state of indebtedness all over the country and were in the hands of the money-lenders. He did not want to say anything against the money-lenders who performed a useful part. They served to bridge over hard times, and on the whole he did not know that they were more grasping or more hard than money-lenders in any other part of the world. But when he looked into the debts and the history of their indebtedness, he found that one of the principal causes why agriculturists were in such a hopeless condition was that they were unable to contest the figures of their creditors or to tell the history of the debt, being unable to read or write. They could not keep any check whatever on the operations of the money-lenders, and that was one of the reasons why they wanted education. If the people could only learn how to read and write and add simple figures, that would make a very great difference in their well-being. There was also a great want of technical education in India, although there was no want of technical ability. More agricultural instruction was also required. This want had, he was aware, been removed of late to a certain extent, but not so much as it ought to have been. There was a great deal more required to be done in all the secondary branches of education. In alluding to higher education one touched upon more difficult ground. He was aware that some people held the view that the higher education in our universities only tended to make disloyal subjects. This was the fault not so much of the education as of the manner in which it was imparted. In the old days more individual attention was paid to the students by the professors in our universities. This was important because the Indian student was a man who responded very readily to sympathy. He was extremely amenable, and if they could introduce more of the old personal feeling, which used to exist between the professors and their pupils, they would be going a long distance towards removing some of the evils of the system of higher education in India. Under the present system the young man had to study with a large class of other students, and the professors could not introduce that personal sysmpathy which was the true secret of all our rule in India, and the want of which was the real root of all our difficulties. This was all a matter of money, for if they sent out more professors and had a more careful selection of students they would do away with a good many of the difficulties. The present system might be described as pouring new wine into old bottles. The Indian students had already assimilated the philosophy of the West, but they did not know how to apply it because they had not been properly trained and led by the sympathetic treatment of their professors to understand what western ideas really meant. He had met Indian gentlemen of high education with whom he could talk as freely as he could with any Englishman, and who could speak with him on equal terms on these great questions. They had to take care that the rising generation of India was brought up in such a way that they would be able to absorb the real spirit of western culture and assimilate it to the spirit of eastern culture. If they would treat Indian students in this way they would find that a great many of the difficulties existing at present would disappear. They were bound to go forward in this matter because it was too late to turn back. If they persevered with the sympathetic treatment of these Indian students he felt sure that in the future they would have no reason to complain of having introduced western culture in India. He was aware that for all these things they required more money, and they would have to spend a great deal more money in the future upon education in India. It was necessary for them to introduce fresh spheres of industry. India was not a poor but a rich country, enormously rich in mines, but the natural resources of India were not properly exploited. To do that, more education was required. It was lamentable the amount of brain-power that was being wasted in India. Many new industries might be introduced. Some hope should be held out that the Government of India would institute an inquiry into the present condition of education in India and suggest how it might be improved and developed.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the time has come for an impartial and searching inquiry into the scope, character, and methods of education in India.—(*Mr. Laidlaw.*)

*MR. KEIR HARDIE (Merthyr Tydvil) expressed regret that during the discussion of this subject the Government of India were not represented on the Government Benches. It was a very serious state of affairs. It was also to be regretted that the head of a great Department like the India Office should not sit in that House, but in another place. He endorsed what had been said by the mover and seconder of the Resolution concerning the importance of the question of the education of the people of India. The condition of the village industries of India could be vastly improved if only technical instruction were imparted to those who had followed certain occupations for ages, but who continued to pursue them in accordance with the methods which obtained generations ago. It had been estimated that the produce of the soil at present under cultivation in India might be increased by from 30 to 50 per cent. if more modern methods of agriculture were employed. It could not be alleged that the paucity of education in India was due to any want of desire on the part of the people to have better education for their children. One of the things that impressed him most in the country villages of India was to find the sons of ryots coming long distances and paying what for them were heavy fees in order to attend school. The village schools were crowded. There was the further fact to be borne in mind that owing to the action of the Government in this matter there was now growing up in India, and especially in Bengal, an educational movement apart altogether from and without the control of the Government educational institutions. It was entirely owing to the policy which was being pursued towards the schools both of the higher and of the lower grades. In this, as in many other respects, the native states were setting an example which might with advantage be followed by our own Government. Baroda and Mysore in particular stood out as examples of what could be done when the Government determined to make education a matter of real importance. In Mysore for example, according to the figures in the Inspector's Report for 1906, the expenditure on schools was made up of 78 per cent. from public funds, 11 per cent. from fees, the remainder being made good from endowments and other sources of income of a miscellaneous character. In East Bengal the figures were 45 per cent. from public funds, 38 per cent. from fees. He thought these figures were in themselves sufficient to justify some inquiry into the methods of education. According to the Inspector's Report the amount spent on eduction in the State of Mysore was equal to a rate of four annas per head of the population, and according to the figures given by his hon. friend opposite the expenditure in British India amounted to something less than 1d. per head. In Baroda education for all classes was free and compulsory. What was being done by native States ought surely to be done under British administration. He rose particularly to give one or two illustrations of the way in which the authorities were seeking to hamper and interfere with the education of the youth of India. He would not refer on that occasion to the University Commission Report, where it was expressly laid down that the fees for entrance to the higher grade schools should not be so low as to encourage boys to enter them who were not suited for rising in the higher walks of life. He wanted to deal in particular with what was known as the Barisal case. In a circular which had been issued by the Indian Home Office it was laid down that certain schools were being used for the purposes of political propaganda. Certain pains and penalties were outlined which were to be applied to schools in which political propaganda was indulged in. During his visit to Barisal a case was brought to his notice which he thought the representatives of the India Office ought to know about, with the view, if possible, of having it put right. In April last year Mr. Sharp, Inspector of Education, complained that the schools at Barisal were being used as a sort of harbour of refuge for rebels and others, that one of the professors had preached sedition in certain villages, and that one of the students had attended a meeting at which seditious speeches were made. The head of the institution pointed out that the student had withdrawn from the college altogether, his time being expired before the meeting referred to, that he had made it a rule not to allow students to take part in such meetings, and that the professor referred to was on holiday at the time he committed the alleged offence. The correspondence on this matter went on for some time. The police of the district supplied the authorities as usual with all sorts of misleading information, and the final result was that the grant to the school was withdrawn, and the threat held out that the right to be examined for entrance to Calcutta University would be withdrawn. It seemed to him that that was a case requiring some investigation. He had gone through the whole of the correspondence, and there was no proof to substantiate the charges which had been levelled against the school or its administration. That being so the school ought to be allowed to continue its privileges until at least something could be proved against it. At Seraj-Gunge there were two higher grade schools of a semi-private kind. Both enjoyed a reputation as centres of education. It appeared that in April last year a local banker was alleged to have been assaulted by school boys. The official statement showed that what he complained of was that the boys made a noise, that his horse shied, that stones were thrown, and that his hat fell to the ground. Beyond that nothing seemed to have happened, but the Government education authorities insisted on the schools managers discovering the boys alleged to have been guilty of the assault and having them punished. The master replied that he did not know the boys and that it was not his business to play the part of the police. Then the grant to the school was withdrawn, and it was still withdrawn, and boys who desired to go up to the university for examination were barred from doing so. He respectfully submitted that action of that kind was not consistent with our whole policy with regard to education. If anyone had been guilty, by all means let him be punished, but to punish a whole school for what might have been the horseplay of a few boys was neither logical nor just. He hoped a promise would be given on behalf of the Government that there would be full inquiry into the whole of the state of education in India, and especially into the question how far the Government of India was punishing schools for alleged political malpractices which had not been shown to exist. No one could visit India without being impressed with the great need which existed for the better education of Indian children. If only a tenth part of the money which was being wasted on military operations were diverted to education, the result would be a gain to the people of India and increased prestige to the people at home.

*MR. REES (Montgomery Boroughs) congratulated the hon. Member for Merthyr Tydvil on the comparatively moderate speech he had made. He agreed with much of what had been said regarding the native States, but he would point out that the hon. Member had been most unfortunate in his selection of the native States which he had named. It was quite true that education in Mysore was highly developed, but hon. Members knew that this development occurred under the administration of the Government of India, and when the rendition took place the public servants, whom the Government of India had employed were retained. The administration of Mysore continued up to the [present day was as British in character as it was during the fifty years when the administration was actually British. The hon. Member who seconded the Motion had asked why they should waste so much money on the defence of India instead of spending it on education. It was because of the peace which our military expenditure introduced in India that they were able to attend to education at all. Previously, the native States were employed in petty warfare with one another, and there was no education at all. No hon. Gentleman had been able to make out any case against the British Government in this respect. He would ask the hon. Gentleman who seconded the Resolution, and who had travelled as very few men had, why he should condemn the insularity of this House in debating at such length the proper number of public-houses, while he ignored the fact that if it were not for the military expenditure in India there would not be that peace which, he would allow, made education possible. The hon. Member for Nottingham seemed to imagine that we could maintain peace, perfect peace in India by means of agreement with European powers and withdraw the British Army.

SIR H. COTTON (Nottingham, E.) said he never made such a statement.

*MR. REES said that he thought that the hon. Member's little book on India practically stated what he had just said. He thought that the hon. Member for Merthyr Tydvil was unfortunate in citing the case of Mysore, and he objected to any deductions regarding the treatment of educational institutions by the Government of India being drawn from the district of Barisal. That was the only district in India in which the Government found it necessary to apply the Seditious Meetings Act. He protested against any deductions being made from what had taken place in one town of one district of one province in the great Empire of India. His hon. friend who moved the Resolution was anxious that the Government of India should spend immensely large sums on education, but where was he going to get the money? This was not a case in which the Government had a Monte Cristo gold mine. To carry out the hon. Member's views the taxation of India would have to be enormously increased, and that was the one thing which should be most carefully avoided. The hon. Member had talked about sending out an enthusiast on education with thirty millions of money, but he protested that an enthusiast would probably do an infinite amount of mischief. Was it to be supposed that our fellow countrymen, with their long experience of government in India, were so ignorant or malevolent that they did not make the best possible use of the money collected from the people, and that that money should be largely increased for the purpose of hurling education at those who—he did not say did not want it, but who were not in a position to pay for it, and did not ask for more of it? His hon. friend who moved the motion had said that there had been no inquiry into education in India since Sir William Hunter's Commission in 1882. Surely his hon. friend did not believe that nothing could be done without a Commission of Inquiry! During the last five years the whole educational system of India had been over-hauled in the completest way possible; there had been arrangements made for co-ordination which had never been possible before; the heads of departments had met together and had made every possible effort to improve the educational system. He admitted that this question was of the greatest importance, but it should not be judged as at least one hon. Gentleman had judged it, from the standpoint of the conduct of a few students in one school in one district in one province. That was not the way to bring such an important question before the House. His hon. friend the mover had said that he wanted free elementary education throughout India. Did the hon. Gentleman know what the parents of the children really paid for elementary education in India? It was the merest bagatelle, and elementary education was already practically free. If the hon. Gentleman meant that the State was to provide large sums of money to build schools in every village in India, he was proposing to penalise the people of the country to an extent that could be hardly appreciated. They would have to screw up the Land Tax, which was at present moderate, to the sort of figure which was falsely and ignorantly asserted now obtained. Again, with what countries was the education in India compared when the backward condition of education in India was spoken of? It was said that four out of every five Indian villages had no school, that three out of every four boys had no education, that only one girl out of every forty was at school. But hon. Members were comparing an Oriental Empire with this island; and was there any reason in that? There was no possible basis for a comparision between an Oriental Empire and a Western island. If his friends wanted to contrast the relative goodness or badness of the education in our Indian Empire, let them compare it with that of other Oriental countries. [AN HON. MEMBER: Japan.] But Japan was only one country and he regretted he had not the facts, but he understood that already some of the characteristic virtues of the people were threatened. The nearest Oriental country to India was China, and nobody had thought that the information in regard to education in China was worth collecting. He submitted that to compare the educational figures of India with those of this country was to fall into a gulf of insularity that was abysmal. If knowledge was not comparative, what value could attach to the statements of his hon. friend? They were told that there were 1,000,000 natives in India who were to some extent literate in English. The inference he drew from that fact was that so much attention should not be paid to those who spoke for this small fraction of the population, but that an attempt should be made to get at the feelings of the real masses, who were not denationalised, and who had not forsaken all the habits and customs of their country. His hon. friend had referred to Sir W. Hunter's Commission. He remembered that Sir W. Hunter said that, as the result of the present educational system, the original principles of which had been laid down in 1854, we should have a loyal India, and that the educated classes would not want to get rid of us. Now, if there was one class which desired to get rid of us it was that very class of people who had received a sort of English education. The education given to the masses of the people of India where it was desired, should be suited to those who received it; it should be given in the vernacular, and should lay before them the former state of the country, the anarchy and misery from which they had emerged, and the great benefits they now enjoyed from British rule. That was far from the result upon those who were at present literate in English. No reference had been made by the hon. Members who had moved and seconded the Resolution to the fact that the present Secretary of State for India had appointed two educationists to his Council, one a native gentleman of great experience in education in a native State, and the other a European of high educational authority. The present Government of India, under Lord Minto, was also considering what great advantage could be gained by making elementary education throughout India free—a proposition which he understood from inquiry had not met with very general support. Then, comments had been made by his hon. friends upon the expenditure on education in India. He saw that there had been an annual increase in the last thirty years of a quarter of a million in the amount spent upon education. He did not know why this should be the subject of criticism, when he considered that eighty per cent. of the population of India were agriculturists in a small way, and were not in need of that kind of education which would make them discontented with their occupation and their rulers. It was at least doubtful, in his opinion, whether there was any particular need for taxing them in order to hurl at them a system of education for which they had not asked. The sum spent on education produced annually 1,500 B.A.'s and 8,000 graduates whose conduct had not been such as to encourage the Government to make the sum larger. Was it certain that this sum was inadequate to meet the requirements of the State? His memory would not serve him to recall the many classes of colleges and schools which existed in India, and it was extraordinary that this system of education should be so complex, so complete, and so widely dispersed in India as it was. It was not as if it were a case of European countries, where the Government had yielded yard by yard in resistance to the demand made upon it, but the Government of India had, out of its own conscientiousness and its own sense of what was right and just to the people, practically thrust upon them this education. He did not say that the people had not readily assimilated it, that was to say, the upper classes, such as the Brahmins, the landlords, and particularly those in Bengal—those upper castes whose electioneering talent and political instinct were so great that although they were members of a privileged class, and aristocrats of the most distinguished position, they had persuaded the democratic Members of this House, who sat upon the opposite bench and the Radical Members who sat on that side, that they were their natural allies, and had induced them to make common cause against the interests of the masses of their fellow-countrymen. What was this education in India into which they were asked to have an inquiry? There were five Universities after the model of the University of London, and they controlled nearly 200 colleges and about 23,000 students. It was originally intended that supervising officers should inspect these colleges in order that they should be kept in some control; but that did not happen, and these colleges had been left to their own devices. Very soon it became apparent that English education had a marketable value however imperfect it was, and these colleges were used not for the furtherance of education or for the keeping up of educational standards, but for the easy acquirement of a Bachelorship of Arts, or failing that a subordinate qualification which might give a claim to a clerkship. In this way the standard of education fell below that which was originally intended and which the Government desired to keep up, and a conference was held on the subject in 1905. The Government of India proposed to the provincial governments of India that they should make the care of elementary education in India one of their chief concerns, and not only did the former Government profess that desire but they gave a grant of some £200,000 a year for the purpose of assisting local governments to carry it out, and they had made that grant annually ever since. It had become absolutely necessary that the senates of these Universities and the governing bodies should be reconstituted, and they were reconstituted by an Act passed after the fullest possible inquiry by the late Viceroy after communication with every important educational authority in India, in order to keep up the standard of those colleges which were affiliated to those Universities. And what was the result? A storm of protest, and the Viceroy who had carried that measure left India under a cloud of obloquy, and amidst a storm of abuse. This was because of the reform of these Universities and colleges in order to keep up the standard of education and prevent them from turning out half educated graduates and scholars. The object of the scholars too often was not education but to write B.A. after their names, and it was because he desired to prevent this state of things that the late Viceroy left India one of the most unpopular of men, and it was this and nothing else which led to his being the victim of most gross and unfair abuse by the vernacular Press of Bengal. The Government properly proceeded on the basis of allowing the Universities to reform themselves. An inspector of education, Mr. Orange, was brought out from England, and after his arrival he believed a new era of educational efficiency began in India, just as a new era of administrative efficiency began in England when the House of Orange came here. He did not attribute this, however, to the introduction of a stranger from England to the chief place in the educational hierarchy. Another step had been taken by the late administration in India. The Government of India had the courage to point out that in the schools of India the vernacular was not sufficiently taught. That was the fact, and it was also the fact that our public servants were not able to converse easily with the natives. The Government insisted that education should be given in the vernacular language, and no step was more necessary in our educational arrangements in India. Then as to secondary education, new training schools had been opened; and in regard to primary education, more and better teachers were appointed, the inspecting staff was increased, and the industrial and commercial branches were developed. He could remember the way in which senates of Universities were formed. Everybody who was of any importance, or thought himself to be of any importance, became a fellow of his local University. In the time of the late Viceroy this matter was altered and senates more capable of performing the duties were appointed. In addition hostels were founded in order to give the students somewhere to live, a most necessary provision, because he would really hesitate to tell the House the manner in which those students who ought to be in a state of pupilage lived, and the conditions of the quarters of the towns in which they dwelt. Efforts were also made to remove politics from the purview of these educational institutions, and to keep boys from college out of brawls in which they were far too prone to indulge. But the reforms which had lately taken place did not stop there. Training schools were opened for Hindoo and Mahomedan widows and the wives of masters, so that there might be women capable of inspection for education purposes, and of giving zenana teaching to girls of high class families. Another step had been taken by improving Bengal into two administrations with equal rank, the original province, equal in size to over a dozen Scotlands and in population to two Great Britains and Irelands, having been too large to manage. He thought that these and other measures ought to be mentioned to show that the Government of India did not lie under the accusation of being indifferent to education or had not provided sufficient funds for it. A searching inquiry into the scope, character, and methods of education in India was in his judgment uncalled for and might at the present moment do more harm than good. Nothing could be less justifiable than this charge, though of course it might fairly be said against our system of education that it destroyed that reverence for authority which was desirable, and that instead of being brought up to reverence his parents, his religion, his country, and his Government, the Indian student was brought up now to show no respect for anybody else, and little for himself. A change was needed in that respect. The Government of India worked under extraordinary limitations. It had to divorce education from religion and it was not to be supposed that this particular difficulty had escaped its notice. The Government of India had had it before them over and over again and they had attempted to deal with it by prescribing text-books and by other measures. But the difficulty was inherent in the situation. The Government of India could only be neutral as to religious instruction, and therefore we should have to put up with this difficulty and the difficulties we were now exposed to would multiply and increase. He had seen a statement made by the superintendent of the municipal schools of Bombay. That gentleman was a Parsee and therefore impartial as well as capable. He said—

> "The Indian student does not command much influence among the masses of his countrymen and does not represent them."

He believed that to be literally true. There must be something wrong he thought about a system of education which produced students of whom such things could be said and which turned out so many lawyers that the people talked of our Government as the "Kingdom of the Lawyers." These lawyers said: "Who says we are not capable of ruling India? We rule India now." Mr. Bepin Chandra Pal had said that. Yes, but subject to the impartial British supervision. It was that feature of the system of which they desired to be rid. Did his hon. friend approve of the character of the educational establishments in Bengal, for instance, and of their results? He did not think an inquiry of the kind asked for would remove the real educational difficulty of our government of India. He did not know how it could be removed, but if it could it would be a great step forward. Those who were responsible for this system of education so little knew what they were doing that Lord Macauley in 1836 said that if his advice was taken there would not be an idolator in Bengal in thirty years time! If any change was to be made it should be in the direction of going back as far as possible to the vernacular languages. We wanted to depart from the principle of teaching everything through the medium of the English language and from inculcating the principle that anything that is good for this country must of a necessity be good for India. If the hon. Gentleman could institute an inquiry or Commission which would remove this difficulty, he himself would gladly vote for it. But because he believed that no inquiry would be able to solve this question and that an inquiry now would only have the effect of stirring up factious agitation which was now on the wane, he should vote against the Motion.

*SIR J. JARDINE (Roxburghshire) said the hon. Member had spoken strongly against the Motion, but he was only a private Member, and the House had the right to hear any political reasons there might be against the inquiry from the responsible representative of the India Office. In these Indian debates there were so many Members of great Indian experience and sometimes of high position who wished to speak that they were almost bound to speak with their eyes on the clock.

Attention called to the fact that forty Members were not present. House counted; and, forty Members being found present—

*SIR J. JARDINE, continuing, said that this being the great inquest of the nation it must not be supposed that the discussion must mean censure of the Government of India. He agreed very much with what had been said by the mover and seconder of the Resolution, and concurred in the view that more education was wanted, and that it would have an extremely beneficial effect on the masses of the people. It was necessary to put the ryots and the peasantry upon something like fair terms with the money-lenders and the petty officials who now tormented them. Without doubt, in regard to processes of agriculture and manufacture of many kinds, technical education would prove a great blessing in India. He had had the opportunity of observing the work done by colleges and Universities in higher education, and he could say that in India, as in this country, and as in Ancient Greece, learning had been well justified of her children. Much of the improvement, the social reforms, the progress in practical arts and in development of the resources of the country had been started and carried out by natives who had received the benefit of higher education. It was one of those matters which might well be submitted to inquiry. It was admitted that by means of the colleges and Universities the public service had been supplied and advanced both in learning and integrity. That was one of the commonplaces they might hear any day from Indian statesmen at prize-givings. The new education had really changed the whole state of things. The subject was often complicated by discussions as to the effect of University education upon speculative political thought and the loyalty of the people. He thought these things were beyond the question. It was difficult to know how much was due to education. Once they had wakened up the mind to think in unaccustomed grooves then they got an element of speculative thought thrown across the landscape of life and what the result would be no one could tell. He thought they might leave these matters out of consideration. The same kind of objection was raised in Ancient Greece when the questioning methods of philosophers like Socrates began to make people think. He was charged with sapping the moral foundations on which the ancient order reposed, with unsettling the minds of youth. Supposing it was true, it could still be said that by education much of the ancient fanaticism had been exploded. He thought a case had been made out as to whether the time had not come for a much greater extension of education in India. They all knew there were great difficulties in the way; those who had had most to do with India were most aware of that fact. Many of the people who forty or fifty years ago were obstinately against any great change were, however, now willing. He would urge that inquiry might be made into the question as to how far the Government had gone forward or had been guilty of shortcoming in getting the natives to join in the management of every sort of educational concern. The chief value of high bodies of learning in India was that Europeans and natives met on terms of learned and academical equality and there was a large exchange of views. Where they had western people laying down the law for oriental communities that was a very desirable thing, and it might be carried out much further. He thought there would be a great advantage in having some such inquiry as had been suggested by the hon. Member who moved the Resolution. It was evading the question to try and make out that this was some sort of censure upon the Government of India. It was waste of time to lavish praise on distinguished Viceroys whom no speaker had abused. He would remind the House of an ancient Latin problem:

Whoever found fault with Hercules? The Motion raised a very serious question. It was admitted that the money spent annually on education in India was nothing great. There was a tendency now in the highest official circles in India to make elementary education free, and there was a great discussion of the subject going on in England. It would be a good thing if this inquiry were begun, even if it were confined to one province and to finding out what methods had been successful there. If the inquiry took place in the small province of Burma where there had been uncommonly good results through establishing a popular Educational Board, where not only departmental officials but all the learned professions, the missionary colleges, and the Buddist monks were well represented, he could understand that it would be an advantage to the officials when the report was sent in. He wished particularly to endorse what his hon. friend had said as to the great advantage of the professors sent out from this country being imbued a great deal with a knowledge of oriental people and a great regard for them. The great danger now was that we might be altogether too western in our notions. In old times it was sometimes said that every European who went out to India used to degenerate towards the oriental character. Sir James Mackintosh recorded that the mild ones among us became Brahmanised and the haughtier ones sultanised. There were disadvantages but also advantages in that, and he thought the danger now was that in the administration of education as well as of other things we might not be giving sufficient weight to the feelings of the people, their learning, their traditions, their religions, and generally to the pervading influences of that peculiar world in which they had been born and in which they had grown up and into which we had been pitched. Therefore, for such reasons as had occurred to him in the course of the debate, he should support the Resolution.

*SIR HENRY CRAIK (Glasgow and Aberdeen Universities) said he could not claim to speak with the expert knowledge of those who had addressed the House, but the subject of education necessarily had a special interest for him, and he had long made the subject of Education in India a matter of special study. The hon. Member for Merthyr Tydvil had expressed surprise that so few members were present to listen to the debate, and he especially singled out the Opposition as failing in that respect; but, if educational discussion at home were to turn upon questions of that kind, upon the vast differences between the west and the east, upon certain political discussions and differences, and upon divergencies on purely financial questions, he wondered what interest they would raise in the House even if the Motion related to education at home. It was not at all necessary to enter upon these wider questions in connection with education. Could they not leave them open and direct their attention to the very definite questions which called for solution? The House was not provided with the necessary material for fully discussing the question; and, even when they did get to discussing it, instead of confining themselves to purely educational matters they got into all sorts of side issues of caste and political divergencies. There were two or three educational matters which struck him as requiring attention and amendment in India. He would not say this if he depended merely on his own knowledge, but he was convinced he would have the agreement of the majority of those actually engaged in the administration of India and especially of education there. His own observation on the spot had only confirmed these views. The first of these was no doubt the difficulty that had been referred to, that the education was too bookish and not sufficiently practical. That was quite true, but how could they teach technical art and workmanship in a country where the particular inhabitants were brought up to inherit a particular trade and not to interfere with any other? They were carpenters or weavers, or followed some inherited and well-defined handicraft, and they would not change. It was very hard to spread technical knowledge of a general kind among a population of that sort. In fact the question of technical education n India was a subject of vast difficulty. No one could fail to be impressed by its defects, and also by its urgent need; but the utmost caution was required in seeing how to engraft it upon the local conditions. As for the question of free education, it was almost a mockery to speak of it. The fee paid was very often something like two annas a month or a nominal fee of that sort. In most cases there was also some payment in kind, but such payment in kind was traditional and usual. He wanted rather to come to that part of education which came more prominently before an Englishman visiting India, and on which he was perhaps able to form a better opinion. The first defect he had seen in the secondary schools, comparing them with our own, was what applied there far more than in elementary schools—the lack of any practical technical education. It seemed to him as he went through school after school that there was a mildew over the work in this respect. He would give only one instance. He remembered having been shown by the head of one of these schools an instrument for taking Marconi messages. He asked with what place they were connected and was told there was no connection and that it was simply an instrument to show how a message was taken. It was of no more value for technical education than a toy, giving no scientific knowledge of the subject at all. The same sort of thing spread through it all and no one was more ready to admit the defects than the heads of some of these colleges. There was another defect which went far deeper, and that was that the education, faulty and defective as it was, was far too much regulated by the evil system of examinations. He was not going to praise or blame those who established the educational system in India. It was established at a time when the worship of competitive examinations held full sway and when it was believed that it and it alone was to regenerate education. He referred to the ideas prevaling in the third quarter of last century. We had learnt better. We had learnt that the system was thoroughly false, and were getting quit of it as fast as we could from our schools. More and more we were feeling that it was wrong, that it took away from the teacher the real influence that he ought to have, and that it made school work a degrading and not a fruitful pursuit. That was exactly what they had got and what they apparently could not break away from in India. He remembered a conversation he had with one of the very best of the principals of these schools, who told him how he was held down in all his work by the necessity of preparing exclusively for these examinations. He must work his scholars solely for matriculation or the first B.A. examination or some or other of the University examinations. He said—

> "Why, do you know what I have been doing to-day. I have been teaching these Indian boys 'Silas Marner,' and Shelley's 'Ode to a Skylark.' They could not understand one word of it."

They could not get that into the minds of these people. A book like "Silas Marner" was absolutely unintelligible to an Eastern student. Yet against his will, knowing that it was doing no good, this able and highly qualified principal was being forced to teach according to this treadmill work. He knew the difficulties perfectly well. He knew the hon. Gentleman would put forward the difficulty of getting rid of the system, and point out that they could not without it maintain any uniform standard or trust the localities not to undersell each other. That might be true. He admitted the difficulty; but unless they could get over that some way or other, and get rid of this competitive system, they would never have real education in India. One other point he would press on the hon. Gentleman. He was not in favour of a new Commission of Inquiry. Let them not pull things up constantly by the roots to see how they were growing. It was the worst thing in the world. Let them leave education to grow by itself. If any official went wrong let them hang him. Let them bring him to book and turn him off, but let them not interfere with his work by a constant recourse to the meddling of Commissions. He knew what these Commissions would do. They had had a tendency already to this interference of officialism at home. Personally he regretted the sending out of a junior official from England to take a portion of authority over old and experienced men. The hon.

Member who had moved the Resolution hoped that no one connected with Indian education would be a Member of the Commission—no one, that was to say, who had given his life to the work, and necessarily knew it. In sending out a Commission which was to be exempt from any sort of experience, to be drawn from new men, who were to be dumped upon India without knowledge of the vernacular, which could only be slowly acquired, would be to commit over again the mistake that was made between 1850 and 1860, when this county dumped upon India its new idea of competitive examination. Let them try to develop the genius of the Indian people on their own lines and get rid, if they could, of that absurd idea that they could only teach higher education through the medium of the English language. The very same Principal whose words he had just quoted told him that the very best student of philosophy he had ever met with in India could not get his degree in philosophy on the verdict of the examiners, although they all agreed with the Principal in placing him at the highest intellectual level, simply because he was not familiar with the English language. Could there be anything more absurd? They had to train these natives to take their place in native States as Indian gentlemen, Indian landlords, and leaders of Indian society, which was far better than that they should be Babus or lawyers or agitators. Why should they be taught that no knowledge can come except through the language of a Western island? Some of the wisest men he had met amongst our own administrators regretted this superstitious cultivation of the English language among the natives. One very high official, in all but the highest official rank in India, told him that he had called on an Indian gentleman and finding his children alone in the room he began to speak to them in Hindustani. They said they did not know the language, but if he would speak in English they could understand him. So far had this superstition gone that in certain Indian families the children were discouraged from speaking in their own vernacular, but were encouraged to speak in a foreign language. He was not in favour of a new Commission of Inquiry bringing in a flood of alien ideas, but he would press the hon. Gentleman to consider one point which he thought essential for the bettering of educational administration in India. A great scheme of educational change could only be put forward in the Viceroy's Council through the Secretary for the Home Department in India. How should we do here if the Board of Education could only be represented in the Cabinet by the Home Secretary or some alien official? He was perfectly certain that in the working of the Education Department they could not have their views properly laid before the highest authority until they had a representative on the Viceroy's Council. He had heard over and over again complaints amongst the educational administrators of India of the difficulty they had felt—that after they had elaborated their scheme the whole thing had to go through the gamut of secretaries, under-secretaries, and clerks in another Department. He knew that the general view of the official in India was against this, but he was certain if he had learnt anything in educational administration that the complaint made by the educational administration in India was a just and right one, and that they would never have a sound scheme brought forward and carried through or even considered with due care unless they had what all the other administrative Departments of India had, a representative of their own on the Viceroy's Council.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. CHARLES HOBHOUSE, Bristol, E.): I regret that my hon. friend the Under-Secretary for India is prevented by indisposition from being present on this occasion to reply for the Government. The hon. Member who has just sat down has indicated as his remedy for many of the educational defects in the educational system of India the adding of another member to the Viceroy's Executive Council. But quite apart from the difficulties in the way of adding a member to that Council I cannot help expressing my own feeling, drawn from a very considerable experience at close quarters with Indian administration, that an additional member on the Viceroy's Council generally means delay and not expedition in the treatment of subjects, and while I have no authority to speak on behalf of the India Office upon this matter my own opinion is clearly against any such remedy. The Resolution before the House is that there should be an inquiry into "the scope, character, and methods of education in India." It has been suggested in the course of the debate that it would practically be a censure upon the Government of India if such an inquiry were instituted. I have had an opportunity of seeing Indian administration at the closest possible quarters during the last six months, and I am in a position to tell the House with confidence that there is no subject, amongst all those which occupy the attention of those entrusted with the government of India, which is so close to their hearts and so much occupies their constant attention as that of education. If I were to indulge in any personal criticism of that administration I should say that their thoughts are too much and not too little occupied with the subject of education. Quite apart from the effect which the acceptance of this Motion might have upon the Government of India, I should like the House to consider what the Government has done during the last ten years. The hon. Member for Hackney has pointed out that the amount spent upon education in India is comparatively small. I agree. It is now about £2,500,000, but that is an increase in the last ten years of 80 per cent. upon the previous expenditure. Since the year 1895–6 that expenditure has gone up from £1,400,000 in round figures to £2,500,000 in the year 1905–6. It is said that more money is wanted for education. But there is not a service in India which does not utter the same cry; so that the House has to choose whether it will increase the taxation of India, or reduce the expenditure on certain objects, or starve the future requirements of India in respect of sanitation, hospitals and dispensaries, which are badly wanted in the country districts, and agriculture. All these are the pressing needs of India, and their provision means a substantial addition to expenditure. While on the one hand we have this demand for increased expenditure, the Government are threatened with a possible diminution of income in India from opium. We are also faced in the present year with a balance which, although it is on the right side, is so small that we cannot by any means be assured that we shall find ourselves on the right side in the future. Perhaps I may be allowed to point out what advantages have been derived by the people of India from this increased grant for educational purposes during the last ten years. The number of educational institutions has gone up from 152,000 to 160,000, and the number of persons attending from 4,300,000 to 5,250,000. Therefore there has been a notable and substantial addition to the number of persons who desire to take advantage of the education provided, and who have had facilities afforded them for bettering their position. And here let me say how cordially I agree with everything that has fallen from hon. Members on both sides of the House as to the advantages of education given in the vernacular. There has been a notable increase in the number of those who have studied the vernacular and received their education through its aid. The numbers have increased by 700,000 and the attendances of those in the primary schools are equally satisfactory. I hope I have not dwelt upon these very material facts at undue length. Let me now return for a moment to the inquiry suggested in the Motion. Reference has been made to the Educational Commission, under the chairmanship of Sir William Hunter, which was instituted during Lord Ripon's Viceroyalty. The effects of that Commission are reviewed quinquennially; and the Report, which is expected this year, will, I am sure, be very satisfactory reading to hon. Members. But there has been more recent investigations. In 1902 there was an Indian Universities Commission, the result of which was that the control of the Universities over the affiliated colleges and high schools has been greatly increased and the standard of education raised. In 1901–2 there was a technical education committee, which resulted first of all in the appointment of certain special instructors of high attainments; and secondly in a special grant of 2½ lakhs for technical instruction. Some of the methods in the technical schools have been criticised, but I myself have found in one school the practice of weaving being taught on a commercial scale. Some of the pupils themselves introduced a hand loom, and so simplified the machine as greatly to reduce the cost. There has also been the Simla Conference of 1901, which was attended by all the directors of public instruction of the provincial Governments, and led to the entire reconstruction of educational methods and control in India. It led further to a great reduction of examination and to a great increase of inspection—a change which has been decidedly beneficial. Now, what is the present system in India? The universities are controlled by their own senates, and the higher schools and colleges are more or less largely controlled by the university authorities. I think that in most cases—I am not sure that I can say all—they receive considerable grants from the Government. Then there is the case of the middle schools. I am not altogether sure that they are in a satisfactory state. They are largely under the control of the municipal authorities, and the inquiries which I and my colleagues have had to conduct in India on another subject, and which it was impossible in many cases not to include under the head of education, have led me clearly to the conclusion that an education tax is not regarded by them with any satisfaction at all. That is natural. We are not fond of taxes in our own country. An education tax does not bring with it an immediate return, and while we regret the apathy with which education is regarded by the municipalities I think that after all that is a passing condition of sentiment, and no doubt the time will come when in the municipalities in question they will perceive the advantage of rating themselves for the benefit of their own children. I come now to the case of the primary schools. These are under the control mostly of local boards, assisted no doubt by Government grants. Here my own experience leads me to think that there is far too much interference with the educational authorities in the primary schools, and, although the district boards may not conduct the primary schools as the Education Department might desire at the present moment, I would rather see greater responsibility placed on the district boards with the view of their educating themselves in the management of these schools, so that eventually both the boards and the schools might become more interested in education than they are now. Reference has been made to female education. Nobody who has ever been in India, for however brief a period, or who has in any way studied Indian problems, can have omitted to notice the extraordinary advance which has been made in the education of girls. The religions, caste, and tradition, are against it, and it is very slowly indeed that the gates are being opened to the females of India to place them on the high road of education. It is impossible to force upon any class in India the education of their female relatives until they themselves are ready to send them to school. Let me add this. There has been to a limited extent, from all that I can gather, a very great change in the opinion of certain classes in India as to female education. I recollect very well on one occasion I saw performed in public certain dances by female children of Brahmins—an exhibition which, I am told, twenty years ago would have been absolutely impossible. That is a mark of the progress, almost the revolution, which has taken place on that subject in the course of the last quarter of a century. I have dwelt on education as applied to the general masses of the population of India. I have not mentioned what is a very important factor in Indian social life, namely, that there has been a distinct attempt to give instruction to the ruling classes—the chiefs and the aristocracy. There are five colleges all doing excellent work in the training of chiefs to take a serious part in the administration of their States, and everyone who has visited and seen these colleges cannot help testifying, I think, to the efficiency of the educational work they are doing. As to the people administering the great system of education, there is the Indian educational service recruited in this country, the provincial service recruited in India—these two forming what is called the superior service—and there is the subordinate service recruited entirely in India. I do not know that all these three classes are in an entirely satisfactory condition. There are improvements which might possibly be made in the *status* and condition of entry into these classes, and these alterations and improvements are occupying the careful and earnest attention of the Secretary of State. We have heard a great deal as to the feeling here on education in India. We are entitled to ask what is the state of feeling in India on education. One class, not inconsiderable as regards numbers and influence, would like to see examinations lessen and graduates increase. On the other hand, an increasing class in India, as I heard from the Vice-Principal of Calcutta University, want to see education "screwed up," so to speak —concentrated in a smaller number of schools of greater efficiency, in which the standard of instruction is very high and the teachers most capable. I entirely sympathise with that school of thought, and I should like the university degree to connote a high standard of education. I think it is almost impossible to deny that in many places the municipal authorities are apathetic as regards the matter of education in relation to primary schools. I hope that there is an increasing interest among the district authorities in that country. I am quite certain as to the kind of encouragement which ought to be given in the primary schools. It is only in what are called the backward districts that there is any freedom or latitude at all given to the local authorities as to the kind of education given in the schools. I should like to see that extended so that the education might be adapted to the requirements of the district, and I should like to see very much greater advantage taken of the schools which are maintained by the priestly class in Burmah and Scinde. I do not think enough advantage has been taken of these two mediums, and more sympathetic administration might conduce to greater use of them. I am glad to think that the authorities in these two provinces are well aware of the shortcomings of the past, and that it is their intention to make greater use of these mediums in the future than they have hitherto done. If, on behalf of the Secretary of State, I am unable to accept the Resolution it must be understood that it is not because there is not the fullest sympathy with the object in view and with the opinions expressed; it is rather because the work of education in India has progressed and is steadily being pushed forward, and any inquiry of the sort suggested would not really expedite it.

EARL PERCY (Kensington, S.) expressed his concurrence with the view of the hon. Gentleman, and hoped his transfer to another sphere of political life would not prevent his taking part in these debates. One inquiry had not been referred to, that made by the central government of local governments on the subject of free education. He hoped that the replies of the local governments would be placed before the House.

MR. LAIDLAW said he had no wish to press his Motion. The debate had been useful and interesting, and had served its purpose in eliciting the statement just made. He hoped that any expressions he might have used would not be construed into an attack on the Indian Government, the Secretary of State, or any of the officials connected with the Education Department.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

LICENSING BILL.

Postponed Proceeding on Amendment to Question [28th April], "That the Bill be now read a second time," resumed.

Question again proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

And, it being after Eleven of the clock, and objection being taken to further Proceeding, the debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed to-morrow.

Adjourned at two minutes after Eleven o'clock.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Thursday, 30th April, 1908.

The House met at a quarter before Three of the Clock.

NEW WRIT.

New Writ for the County of Salop (Northern or Newport Division), in the room of Colonel the Right Hon. William Slaney Kenyon-Slaney, deceased.—(*Sir Alexander Acland-Hood.*)

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Dundalk Urban District Council Bill.—Read the third time, and passed.

Margate Corporation Bill. — As amended, considered; to be read the third time.

Swinton and Mexbrough Gas Bill.—As amended, considered; A Clause added; Amendments made.—Bill to be read the third time.

South-West Suburban Water Bill (by Order).—Read a second time, and committed.

Southwell District Gas Bill; Cheshire Lines Committee Bill; Great Western Railway (Superannuation Scheme) Bill [Lords]; Garw and Ogmore Gas Bill.—Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

Huddersfield Water Bill [Lords].—Reported, without Amendment; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

Bill to be read the third time.

PETITIONS.

CHILDREN BILL.

Petitions in favour;—From Dundee; and Kidderminster; to lie upon the Table.

COLTON, WILLIAM GEORGE.

Petition of William George Colton, for inquiry into his case; to lie upon the Table.

COAL MINES (EIGHT HOURS) (No. 2) BILL.

Petitions in favour: From Aldwarke (two); Colley Gate; Diamond Colliery; Gilwen Colliery; Halesowen; Lye; North Staveley; Nunnery; Park and Blaina; Rose Hill; Rotherham Main; Silverwood; Taneni Colliery; Tinsley Park; Tipton; Tirbach Colliery; Waleswood; and Ystradowen; to lie upon the Table.

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL.

Petitions in favour: From Alresford; Fenton; Heywood; Longton; Plumstead; Spennymore; Waterhouses; and Westminster and Chelsea; to lie upon the Table.

HOME WORK REGULATION BILL.

Petition from Birmingham, against; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSING BILL.

Petitions against: From Aston (two); Aston Manor (two); Bakewell; Balsall Heath (two); Beccles; Beer; Birmingham (twenty-four); Bordesley; Brecon; Bridgwater (two); Burton upon Trent; Carmarthen; Caversham, Chinnor; Chipping Sodbury; Clacton on Sea; Cleveland (thirty-five); Coventry; Dover; Edgbaston (three); Halesworth; Honiton; Kent; Leeds (six); Leek; Malt distillers Association of Scotland; Middlesbrough (ninety-four); Mortlake; Newcastle on Tyne (seven); Portsmouth (two); St. Bees; Saltley (two); Sheffield (nine); Small Heath (two); Smethwick; Sparkbrook; Sparkhill; Swindon; Tetbury; Thame; Thornbury (two); Tinsley and Attercliffe; Tonbridge; Tyseley: Wangford; Wickwar; Widnes; Winterbourne; and Worcestershire East; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSING BILL.

Petitions for alteration: From Burnley; Kidderminster; London (two); Norwich; and Tyersal; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSING BILL.

Petitions in favour: From Abercych; Aberdeen; Aldbrough; Alexandria; Allerton; Alresford; Alton; Ancrum; Andover; Ardingley (two); Auchterarder (seven); Balham; Ballydian; Barnard Castle; Barrow in Furness (three);

Barton: Batley; Battersby; Battlebridge Road; Beccles; Bedale; Belfast (three); Belgrave; Birch Grove; Birkenshaw; Birmingham (three); Birstall; Bishop's Watham; Blaenconin; Bolton (three); Boncath; Boness (three); Bonnybridge; Boosbeck; Boothtown; Bowden; Bradford (Yorks.) (two); Bridgwater; Brigham; Bristol; Brotton; Broughton; Browney Colliery; Budleigh Salterton (two); Burnley (twenty-one); Camberwell: Carbrook; Cardigan; Castle Douglas; Chelsea; Cheltenham (three); Cheriton; Chippenham; Chopwell; Clydebank; Colyton (two); Comrie; Corsham; Cove; Cradley; Cricklade; Croft; Crondale; Croydon; Darlaston; Darlington (two); Deal; Dearham; Didcot; Didsbury; Dublin; Dudley; Dulverton (two); Dumfries; Dundee (twelve); Dunvant; East Howle; East Sheen (two); Edinburgh; Eldon; Eston; Exmouth; Faceby; Fenton (two); Ferryhill (two); Fortingall; Freshwater (two); Fullbourne; Gosport; Govan; Gowerton; Glasgow (seven); Great Ayton (two); Great Yarmouth (three); Grosmont; Gwynfe; Haddington; Halifax (three); Harray (two); Harrington; Harristfield; Haverton Hill; Hawick (two); Hayling Island; Heathwaite; Heckmondwike; Heeley; Henderwell; Herne Bay; Heywood (six); High Sittington; Hillside; Holywell; Honiton; Howden le Wear; Huddersfield; Hunslet; Hurworth (two); Hutton Rudby; Irvine; Islington; Kegworth (three); Keyston; Kilchattan Bay; Kilmersdon; Kingston on Thames; Kirkintilloch; Lacock (two); Lanark; Lancaster; Lansdowne; Latchford; Latimer Road; Leeds (six); Leicester (three); Leigh (four); Lincoln; Lingdale; Llandilo (three); Llanelly (two); Llanguicke; Llangyfilach; Llansamlet (five); Loanend; Loftus; Longton; Longwood; Lowestoft (two); Lowton; Lossiemouth; Luddenden; Ludworth; Maidstone; Malmesbury (five); Manor Park; Marske; Melsonby; Metal Bridge; Middlesbrough (four); Middleton Tyas; Monkwearmouth; Montgomery; Moylgrove; Mydrinn; Nant-y-Binglog; New Brancegate; Newcastle on Tyne; Newport (Pembroke) (two); Northampton (two); North Petherton; North Shields; Norton; Norwich (six); Nottingham; Nunthorpe; Old Cumnock; Ormesby (two); Ottery St. Mary (two); Pant Leg; Pelton (two); Pembrokeshire; Peterborough; Petersfield (two); Petersham; Piltey; Plumstead (two); Pontardulais (two); Pontardulaw; Portmadoc; Portsmouth (fourteen); Portsoy; Preston next Wingham; Pwlheli; Radstock (two); Redcar; Reddish; Reeth; Rhos; Richmond (Surrey) (five); Ridgmont; Ripponden; Rochdale (three); Rotherham (two); Rothesay; Ruabon; Sacriston; Saffron Walden; Saltburn by Sea; Sandford; Savoch; St. Helens; St. Margarets; Shankhouse; Sheffield (two); Sherston Magna; Sidmouth (two); Skinningrove; South Bank; Southsea (seven); South Shield; Southwick on Wear; Spennymoor (two); Star Clydey; Stilton Stockton on Tees (five); Stodday; Stokesley (three); Straitiplian; Strathtay; Streatham; Stretford (two); Stronsay; Sunderland (three); Surbiton; Temple Cowley; Thirsk; Thornaby; Thornaby on Tees; Tiptree; Tollington Park (two); Tottenham (three); Trafford Park; Tranent; Tudhoe; Tunbridge Wells (two); Warrington (two); Waterhouse; Waterlooville; Westminster (two); Weston-super-Mare (two); Willington (two); Wister Pardovan; Witham; Withington; Witton Gilbert; Wrington; Ystalyfera; and Ystradfellte; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSING BILL AND CHILDREN BILL.

Petition from Portsmouth, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

LIQUOR TRAFFIC (LOCAL OPTION) (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petitions against: From Aberdeen; Border Counties Licensed Trade Defence Association; Falkirk; and Linlithgowshire; to lie upon the Table.

LIQUOR TRAFFIC (LOCAL OPTION) (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petitions in favour: From Auchencairn; Bo'ness (two); Carluke; Crieff; Edinburgh; Glasgow (two); Mulindry; and Pencaitland; to lie upon the Table.

MERCHANDISE MARKS BILL.

Petition for Birmingham, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

PUBLIC OFFICES SITES (EXTENSION) BILL.

Petition from Messieurs Nicholson, Patterson, and Freeland, against, praying to be heard by counsel; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF FOOD AND DRUGS ACTS (AMENDMENT) (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Dundee, against; to lie upon the Table.

SWEATED INDUSTRIES BILL.

Petition from Birmingham, against; to lie upon the Table.

WOMEN'S ENFRANCHISEMENT BILL.

Petition from Richmond, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

EGYPT (No. 1, 1908).

Copy presented, of Reports by His Majesty's Agent and Consul-General on the Finances, Administration, and condition of Egypt and the Soudan in 1907 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

MILITARY PRISONS.

Copy presented, of Report on the discipline and management of military prisons in 1907 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

PAUPERISM (ENGLAND AND WALES) (HALF-YEARLY STATEMENTS)

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 11th March; Dr. Macnamara]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 130.]

BRITISH MUSEUM.

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 18th February; Mr. Trevelyan]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 131.]

PUBLIC INCOME AND EXPENDITURE.

Account presented, of the Public Income and Expenditure in the year ended 31st March, 1908, together with the Balances in the Exchequer at the commencement and at the termination of the year, and the amounts received into or issued from the Exchequer in respect of Funded and Unfunded Debt created or redeemed in the said year [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 132.]

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Military Manœuvres in the New Forest.

MR. ASHLEY (Lancashire, Blackpool): To ask the Secretary of State for War if he will state what arrangement he has made with the Court of Verderers with reference to the proposed military manœuvres in the New Forest.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) As I have already explained, I convened a conference at the War Office, which was attended by representatives of the Office of Woods and Forests, by the Court of Verderers, and by representatives of the Commons Preservation Society and others. As a result of a very full discussion of this question, a draft agreement with the Verderers has been received from Mr. Birkett, the legal adviser of the Commons Preservation Society, and this is now being considered by my legal advisers.

Ex-Soldiers and the Unemployed Workmen's Act.

CAPTAIN FABER (Hampshire, Andover): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that the Director of Recruiting has pointed out that the Unemployed Workmen's Act of 1905 acts detrimentally in the case of soldiers sent home from abroad after a lengthened period of service, inasmuch as they cannot possibly have the residential qualification to enable them to obtain any benefits under the Act; and, if so, whether he can see his way to a modification of the Act in that respect.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) I am aware of the position of soldiers sent home from abroad as regards the operation of the Act in question. The attention of the Local Government Board has already been drawn to the matter, and I have been in personal consultation with my right hon. friend.

Sales of Converted Rifles to Rifle Clubs.

CAPTAIN FABER: To ask the Secretary of State for War whether the War Office is converting rifles to the 22 size and selling them indirectly through civilian rifle clubs; and whether he will consider the desirability of preventing such competition with legitimate traders, seeing that the rifle clubs are civilian.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The reply is in the negative.

Scarlet Fever at Tidworth Barracks.

CAPTAIN FABER: To ask the Secretary of State for War if he can state how many cases of scarlet fever there are at present in the barracks at Tidworth, and whether the cases have been isolated; and, if not, what hospital they are in.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) Four cases of scarlet fever have occurred at Tidworth. The cases are being treated in the Isolation Hospital, Bulford.

Field Artillery Permanent Staff.

CAPTAIN FABER: To ask the Secretary of State for War whether, seeing that garrison companies of Auxiliary Forces, Royal Artillery, have, since the 1st of April, become Field Artillery, the permanent staff, such as sergeant-majors, will now receive the same pay as squadron sergeant-majors of Yeomanry; and, if not, whether, looking at the responsible duties of Field Artillery sergeant-majors in connection with field guns, small stores, harness, and rifles, he can see his way to equalising the pay.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The acting sergeant-major of a Field Artillery Brigade will get 4s. 3d. a day as against 4s. 4d. paid to a Yeomanry staff-sergeant-major. There is, however, no intention of making cavalry and artillery rates of pay uniform in the Territorial Force any more than they are in the Regular Army.

George Ravenhill, V.C.

MR. C. B. HARMSWORTH (Worcestershire, Droitwich): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that George Ravenhill, V.C., is at present an inmate of Erdington Workhouse; and whether he can see his way to relieving this soldier of the necessity of availing himself of charitable relief.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) This is the first intimation we have received on this matter. The case is being investigated.

Colours for Territorial Battalions.

MR. BENNETT (Oxfordshire, Woodstock): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether regimental colours will be granted to Territorial battalions.

Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.) This matter will be settled very shortly.

Civil Service Estimates.

MR. HAROLD COX (Preston): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he is aware that on page 59 of the Civil Service Estimates for the present year there is a footnote stating that provision is made in other Estimates for various items for rates or contributions in lieu; and whether he will explain on what pages of the Estimates the items specified occur.

(*Answered by Mr. Hobhouse.*) The items referred to occur on the following pages of the Estimates for Civil Services and Revenue Departments, respectively—

Item.		£	Page.
Non-effective, Class VI., 1 .		400	481 (Civil Services)
Post Office :			
Sub-head : A, 8	£100		93 (Revenue Departments)
„ C, 5	£1,400		100 „ „
„ G, 6	£20		110 „ „
		1,520	
Post Office (Savings Banks) .		3,400	106 „ „
Telegraph Wires, &c. :			
Sub-head P, 5	£5,700		126 „ „
„ T, 3	£1,150		130 „ „
		6,850	
Total . .		12,170	

Postal Employees and the Territorial Force.

MR. GRETTON (Rutland): To ask the Postmaster General, if he will allow their wages to employees in the Post Office in the Territorial Forces during the period such employees may have to attend military schools of instruction, as the rate of pay at such schools is now reduced from 4s. per diem to 2s., out of which messing has to be paid, and, in the case of employees on the salaried staff, their salaries are not stopped.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) The rule is that members of the Territorial Forces employed in the Post Office attending military schools of instruction are granted special leave without pay, provided no expense or inconvenience to the Post Office is involved and from the Post Office Point of view there appears to be no reason for altering this rule. It applies to all classes of Post Office servants.

Inspectors of Explosives and Directorships.

MR. EVELYN CECIL: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether he is aware that Captain Lloyd, till very lately one of His Majesty's inspectors of explosives, has accepted a seat on the board of Messrs. Curtis and Harvey; and whether, having regard to the opportunities which an inspector of explosives has of obtaining the most intimate confidential knowledge of the methods and plant of rival manufacturers of explosives, he will take steps, by agreement or otherwise, to make it a condition that inspectors of explosives who are appointed in the future shall not accept such engagements, at least within a reasonable time after they have left His Majesty's service.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) It is the fact that Captain Lloyd has accepted a directorship in Messrs. Curtis and Harvey's. The suggestion mentioned in the last paragraph of the Question has been put before me by the leading manufacturers of explosives. It appears to be reasonable, and I propose to adopt it in future appointments, including the appointment just made to fill the vacancy caused by Captain Lloyd's retirement.

Price of Sugar.

MR. HAROLD COX: To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether he can state what is the wholesale price of standard sugar now and at the corresponding dates in the previous ten years.

(*Answered by Mr. Kearley.*) I have been asked by my right hon. friend to reply to this Question. The following statement gives the price quoted for "German 88 per cent. beet sugar (f.o.b.), refiners' terms (floating cargoes off coast for the United Kingdom)," on or about the 23rd April in each of the undermentioned years:—

Year.	Quoted price for "German 88 per cent. beet sugar (f.o.b.), refiners' terms, off coast for United Kingdom.
	Per. cwt.
1898	9*s.* 5¼*d.* to 9*s.* 6*d.*
1899	11*s.* 0¾d.
1900	10*s.* 6¾d.
1901	8*s.* 9*d.* (nominal)
1902	6*s.* 3*d.*
1903	8*s.* 3*d.*
1904	8*s.* 10½*d.*
1905	12*s.* 9*d.*
1906	8*s.* 4½d.
1907	9*s.* 6*d.* to 9*s.* 5½*d.*
1908	11*s.* 9d. to 11*s.* 9¾*d.*

Note.—The above particulars have been compiled from Messrs. Czarnikow's "Weekly Price Current."

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Admiralty Dredgers in Egypt.

MR. BELLAIRS (Lynn Regis): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty what was the total period during which the two dredgers belonging to the Admiralty were placed at the disposal of the Egyptian Government for the improvement of the port of Alexandria without any payment by the Egyptian Government for their services, reckoning from the date of the vessels leaving off their usual work to prepare to proceed on this service for a Government which contributes in no way to the relief of the burdens borne by the taxpayers of this country.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. MCKENNA, Monmouth, N.): The periods respectively were: Two years, five months, one week; two years, five months.

Cordite containing Mercuric Chloride.

MR. ASHLEY (Lancashire, Blackpool): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty if he will state how much cordite containing mercuric chloride is now on board His Majesty's ships.

MR. MCKENNA: So far as is known, there is no such cordite on board His Majesty's ships; but this could not be ascertained definitely without a chemical analysis of all the lots of cordite now on board ship. No useful purpose could be served by such an investigation.

MR. ASHLEY: Will the right hon. Gentleman say, if this cordite is not to be used on board His Majesty's ships, to what use is it to be put?

MR. MCKENNA: So far as I have ascertained, there is no such cordite at present on board His Majesty's ships. It certainly will not be used if it is not there.

MR. ASHLEY: What do you propose to do with the cordite on shore?

MR. MCKENNA: I am not aware that there is any considerable quantity of such cordite on shore. I doubt if there is any, in fact.

MR. BELLAIRS: Will the right hon. Gentleman settle the matter by telling us the quantity of cordite on shore with mercuric chloride in it? I understand there is a very large quantity.

MR. MCKENNA: I think the hon. Gentleman is mistaken on that point. I do not think there is any considerable quantity on shore; but I will inquire.

MR. BOWLES (Lambeth, Norwood) asked whether, so far as the cordite actually on board His Majesty's ships was concerned, samples of each lot had been tested and found not to contain mercuric chloride.

MR. MCKENNA: That is so. So far as I have ascertained, there is no such cordite on board any ships at the present time. I may add, however, that if there is, there is not necessarily any danger.

Naval Armaments.

MR. LONSDALE (Armagh, Mid.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether 13·5 guns are now under construction for naval purposes; and whether it is intended to increase the size of guns on vessels of the "Dreadnought" class.

MR. MCKENNA: I hope the hon. Member will accept my assurance that it is not in the public interest to answer this Question.

Mica Boiler Covering Company, Limited.

MR. HUDSON (Newcastle-on-Tyne): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty if his attention has been called to a police court judgment for workmen's wages, and distress warrants which have been issued against the Mica Boiler Covering Company, Limited; whether this company are contractors or sub-contractors for the work they are doing on H.M.S. "Invincible," now lying at the Elswick Shipyard, Newcastle-on-Tyne; and whether it is the intention of the Admiralty to strike this firm off their list, or what other action, if any, he proposes to take in the matter.

MR. MCKENNA: There is no trace of any report to this effect having reached the Admiralty. The Company is on the Admiralty list, and consequently the main contractors, Messrs. Armstrong, Whitworth and Co., are in order in employing them as sub-contractors. This is being done through the machinery sub-contractors, Messrs. Humphreys, Tennant and Co. I will see that the matter to which the hon. Member refers is at once inquired into.

MR. HUDSON: Will the right hon. Gentleman inquire if a winding-up order has recently been made against this company?

MR. MCKENNA: The whole matter will be inquired into.

Protection of Canadian Fisheries.

MR. HAROLD COX (Preston): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether any of His Majesty's ships are now employed in the defence of Canadian fisheries; and, if so, whether the Canadian Government makes any payment for the services rendered by those ships.

Mr. McKENNA: The Canadian Government protect their own fisheries, and His Majesty's ships are not employed on this service.

Mr. HAROLD COX: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that quite recently a battleship was employed on this duty?

Mr. McKENNA: I can only speak of what takes place at the present moment.

Mr. HAROLD COX: When did the change take place?

Mr. McKENNA: I must ask for notice. It was some years ago, I think.

Navigation of the Solent.

Mr. FELL (Great Yarmouth): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty if the Admiralty regulate the navigation by merchant ships of the waters adjacent to the dockyards at Portsmouth, including the approaches to it through the Solent and Spithead.

Mr. McKENNA: Yes, within the limits of the dockyard port. Spithead is within those limits, and that part of the Solent, eastward of a line joining Old Castle Point and Hill Head Point.

Mr. FELL asked whether, having regard to the frequent serious accidents in the Solent the Admiralty would consider the advisability of extending their jurisdiction west as far as the Needles.

Mr. McKENNA: The hon. Gentleman is now opening up a very large question to which I could not venture to give an answer off-hand.

Mr. FELL: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Board of Trade if any harbour or port authorities have jurisdiction over the navigation of the waters of the Solent and Spithead, and can make any regulations with regard to speed or other precautions to be observed by ships in fogs or snow or thick weather.

The PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY to the BOARD of TRADE (Mr. Kearley, Devonport): There are no harbour or port authorities having such jurisdiction outside the limits of the dockyard port of Portsmouth. The Trinity House, however, who have pilotage jurisdiction there, have given instructions to pilots to navigate vessels at a moderate speed when near Cowes and Yarmouth in order to avoid damage to the shores by the wash created by large vessels. The hon. Member is no doubt aware that there are special articles in the Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea issued in pursuance of the Merchant Shipping Act, prescribing special sound signals and moderation of speed in fog, mist, falling snow, or heavy rain storms.

War Office Storehouse Clerks.

Mr. CHIOZZA MONEY (Paddington, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if there are about 100 storehouse clerks in the employ of the War Office whose pay ranges from 24s. per week to a maximum, after six years of service, of only 26s. per week; and whether, in view of the cost of sustaining in respectability and efficiency a clerk and his family in the neighbourhood of London, he can see his way to raise considerably the maximum pay of these men.

The SECRETARY of STATE for WAR (Mr. Haldane, Haddington): The reply to the first part of the Question is in the affirmative. These storehouse clerks are not clerks in the sense in which the word is used in civil life, but are men who perform only simple routine clerical work in the storehouses, and in addition assist the storeholder or foreman in store duties. Their position is more analogous to that of a warehouseman. It is not proposed to raise their scale of pay.

Mr. CROOKS (Woolwich): Is it not the fact men have already been appointed to similar positions at a commencing salary of 26s. per week?

Mr. HALDANE asked for notice.

Indian Army Officers.

Mr. SMEATON (Stirlingshire): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether, in view of the fact that officers of the Indian Army now form part of the Imperial forces of the Crown, and are eligible for employment on the general staff of the Army, either at home or abroad, he is prepared to support the recommendation recently made by Lord Kitchener through the Secretary of State for India to the effect that any commissioned service by an Indian Army officer in a British regiment out of India prior to joining the Indian Staff Corps or Indian Army shall, to the extent of five years, be allowed to reckon as service towards Indian pension, and that any additional charge entailed thereby shall be treated as an Imperial charge.

MR. HALDANE: The recommendation mentioned has not at present been referred by the India Office to the Army Council, and until the matter is officially before me, I am unable to express an opinion upon it.

Trophy Tax.

MR. BOTTOMLEY (Hackney, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if he will state for what purpose the trophy tax is levied in the city of London; whether, in some cases, its payment has been refused; and what steps, if any, have been taken to enforce its collection.

MR. HALDANE: The trophy tax has hitherto been levied to defray the expense of raising the men to serve in the Militia of the City of London, and for all other incidental charges relating thereto, such as providing the necessary accommodation. Under Clause 39 of the Territorial and Reserve Forces Act, which was inserted at the wish of the Commissioners of Lieutenancy, the tax may be applied to the special reserve battalion corresponding to the Royal London Militia and for the purposes of any of the powers and duties of the County Association for the City of London at the discretion of the Commissioners of Lieutenancy. The tax is levied by the local authorities and the War Office has no cognisance of the mode of collection.

Messrs. Kynochs and Government Contracts.

MR. EVELYN CECIL (Aston Manor): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether, in view of the hardship entailed upon workmen at Messrs. Kynochs by the withdrawal of Government orders, he can see his way to give fresh employment to those who have lost it through no fault of their own, or assist them to obtain it.

MR. HALDANE: The hon. Member is apparently advocating a general principle that when a firm has supplied goods which are not according to specification and further orders for similar goods have been withdrawn, the Government is bound to find employment for the workpeople who may be thrown out of work by the withdrawal of those orders. I fear we have only too great difficulty in finding regular employment in our own factories to be able to consider such a proposition.

*MR. JAMES HOPE (Sheffield, Central) asked if the right hon. Gentleman would give equal consideration to the case of the workmen lately employed on armour-plating and gun shields.

MR. HALDANE: That is part of the general question.

MR. BELLAIRS: Will the right hon. Gentleman, in order to enable Messrs. Kynoch and Co. to be employed again, follow the precedent set in the case of Cammell, Laird and Co., and cause the chairman and responsible directors to resign and then again employ the company?

MR. HALDANE: I do not think that arises out of the Question.

Disturbances in India.

DR. RUTHERFORD (Middlesex, Brentford): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for India whether meetings of congratulation upon the return from prison of Bepin Chandra Pal have passed off peacefully thoughout India with the exception of Tinnevelli and Tuticorin, where the authorities prohibited the holding of public meetings; whether this prohibition led to rioting and loss of innocent life; and whether he will state what were the circumstances which led to this prohibition, and what personal part Mr. Wynch played throughout this unfortunate incident.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. CHARLES HOBHOUSE, Bristol, E.; for Mr. BUCHANAN): No disturbances in connection with Bepin Chandra Pal's release from prison have been reported, except from Tuticorin and

Tinnevelli. The conditions existing at these places were exceptional, in that disturbances unconnected with Bepin Chandra Pal's release had already taken place in February, when it had been found necessary to prohibit meetings proposed to be held in connection with a strike of cotton operatives. It was in view of the continuance of disturbed conditions that the procession announced for the 9th March, the day of Bepin Chandra Pal's release, was prohibited, and subsequent events, including the rioting, and the loss of life which resulted, must be regarded in their connection with the earlier occurrences mentioned. Mr. Wynch, as district judge, was generally responsible for the maintenance of order, and for the measures taken to that end.

The Mohmand Rising.

MR. LONSDALE (Armagh, Mid): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether the Mohmand raiders have been joined by large bodies of Afghans; and whether the authority of the Amir has been invoked to check this movement.

MR. CHARLES HOBHOUSE: Afghan subjects have participated in the Mohmand rising, but as was stated yesterday in reply to a similar Question the action taken by the Amir to prevent such participation seems to be producing the desired result. The Government of India have been in communication with the Amir on the subject.

Women Workers on Cingalese Roads.

MR. H. H. MARKS (Kent, Thanet): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether women and girls are employed by Government Departments in Ceylon in breaking metal for road making and road repairing, being paid at a rate varying from the equivalent of 3*d.* to 6*d.* a day; and whether he proposes to take any steps to put a stop to the employment of female labour on such work.

THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Colonel SEELY, Liverpool, Abercromby). I am aware that in the case of relief works women and children have sometimes been employed in Ceylon on road making and repairing, but I do not know whether they are so employed on ordinary occasions. The Secretary of State, will, however, make inquiry into the matter.

Native Representation in the Natal Parliament.

MR. C. B. HARMSWORTH (Worcestershire, Droitwich): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he is in a position to furnish particulars of the Bill that has been promoted in the Parliament of Natal to secure the proper representation of native opinion.

COLONEL SEELY: I have seen a telegram in the Press on the subject, but no official information has yet been received. As soon as the Gazette containing the Bill reaches the Colonial Office I will communicate with my hon. friend.

South Australian Act.

MR. LONSDALE: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the Royal Assent has been given to the South Australian Act for transferring the northern territory; and what has been the cause of the delay?

COLONEL SEELY: The Royal Assent was given to this Bill by Order in Council dated the 19th of March. The Bill was not received until the 25th of January.

White Settlers in British East Africa.

MR. LONSDALE: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether any steps have been taken to remedy the grievances of the white settlers in British East Africa in regard to the native labour question.

COLONEL SEELY: The Secretary of State must not be understood to accept the word "grievances" in the Question on the Paper. The Government of the Protectorate is bound to exercise supervision over the conditions of native labour, and my noble friend will do nothing to diminish the effectiveness of such supervision. The Governor has, however, appointed a temporary Board, consisting of representatives of the Government and the settlers, to consider the terms on which labour will be recruited by the Government, and to inquire into the conditions of the labour supply.

Mr. ASHLEY: Have any steps been taken to fil up the vacancies in the Council?

Colonel SEELY asked for notice.

Dismissed Transvaal Civil Servants.

Sir GILBERT PARKER (Gravesend): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies how many retrenched Transvaal Civil servants have received appointments in the Colonial service since the granting of responsible government to the Transvaal; how many have been given appointments in other departments of State in the same time; and how many have received appointments in the Colonial service and in other departments since the beginning of this session of Parliament.

Colonel SEELY: Fourteen retrenched Transvaal Civil servants, including members of the South African Constabulary, have received appointments in the Colonial service since the grant of responsible government; in two cases appointments have been offered and not accepted, and in one case a candidate was pronounced medically unfit after an appointment had been offered to him; six further appointments are at present being offered. Three appointments have been given by other departments of the State. Nine appointments have been made since the present session began, and six are at present being offered.

Hayti.

Major ANSTRUTHER-GRAY (St. Andrews Burghs): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he can furnish the latest reports as to the Island of Hayti, and whether any foreign troops have had occasion to land there.

The SECRETARY of STATE for FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir Edward Grey, Northumberland, Berwick): The most recent information is contained in a telegram from the commander of H.M.S. "Cressy," dated the 10th instant, and is to the effect that all was quiet and that His Majesty's Consul General did not anticipate disturbances for the present. H.M.S. "Indefatigable" remains at Port-au-Prince.

The Congo Treaty.

*Sir CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether any proposals before the Belgian Parliament can affect the Congo Treaty, by which Belgium, should she accept the territories covered by the treaty, will assume the sovereignty subject to the obligations specified in Annexe A; whether such obligations relating to the Concessions, as, for example, the Lomami Concession, the exclusive right to forest produce forming a commercial monopoly in the Kasai, and the concession to the Société du Lac Léopold II. granting exclusive rights in a portion of the Domaine, as well as the concessions to the Grands Lacs, A. B. I. R., Anversoise, and Katanga Companies, are consistent with the Berlin Act and with the British Treaty, the signature of which followed that of the American Treaty and preceded the signature of the Berlin Act; and whether these obligations by which Belgium will be bound, if inconsistent with British Treaty rights and with the Berlin Act, can be laid before the House, in order that Parliament may be in a position to support the policy declared by him in accepting the recent resolution of the House of Commons.

Sir EDWARD GREY: Up to the present, His Majesty's Government are aware of no proposals before the Belgian Parliament purporting to modify the terms of the Treaty of Cession. In any case, the treaty obligations of the Congo State cannot be impaired by any conditions of transfer made with the Sovereign of that State. The declarations already made in public by the Belgian Government take the same view. I propose to put in the Library of the House the Treaty of Cession with the Annexes, which include the Concession referred to by the right hon. Gentleman. The question of how far the maintenance of these Concessions as worked at present is inconsistent with the treaty obligations of the Congo State has already formed the subject of communications with the Belgian Government. I cannot at present say when any statement can be made to the House respecting these communications. We have explained to the Belgian

Government very fully our view as to what the treaty obligations are, and Papers on this subject will be laid before His Majesty's Government take any step to recognise the transfer of the Congo State to Belgium, should Belgium eventually decide to annex it.

SIR EDWARD SASSOON (Hythe): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether any representations have been received from the Belgian Government to the effect that the Congo State, having been constituted prior to the conclusion of the Berlin Convention of 1884, cannot be held bound by the provisions of that Act; and, if so, what action he proposes to take in the matter.

SIR EDWARD GREY: It is presumed that the hon. Member is referring to the Berlin Act of 1885 when he alludes to the "Berlin Convention of 1884." The Answer is in that case in the negative.

SIR EDWARD SASSOON: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the Prime Minister made a statement in the Belgian Chamber the other day as to the inapplicability of the Berlin Convention to the Congo State?

SIR EDWARD GREY: I understand that the declaration in the Belgian Chamber was to the effect that Belgium recognised the Convention.

Great Britain and Siam.

MR. SMEATON: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the Anglo-Siamese Agreement has yet been ratified and signed; and, if so, when it may be expected to be laid upon the Table of the House.

SIR EDWARD GREY: No treaty has yet been signed. Whenever any agreement has been come to, it will be presented to Parliament.

Russia and the Case of Edward Howorth, of Blackpool.

MR. ASHLEY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs what steps have been taken to obtain compensation from the Russian Government for Mr. Edward Howorth, of Blackpool, who was shot in St. Petersburg by a workman during recent political disturbances in that city.

SIR EDWARD GREY: Mr. Howorth's case has been most carefully considered in consultation with His Majesty's Ambassador at St. Petersburg. There does not appear to have been any negligence on the part of the authorities such as would justify His Majesty's Government in presenting a claim to the Russian Government.

MR. ASHLEY: Then what remedy has Mr. Howorth?

SIR EDWARD GREY: The circumstances of the case roughly were these. Mr. Howorth was shot or badly wounded in a private place, and there is no allegation that any Russian official was concerned in any way, or was guilty of negligence. Had a disturbance occurred in this country no charge could have been brought against the local authority, and I do not suppose our Home Office would have entertained the question of compensation.

Turkish Customs Duties.

SIR EDWARD SASSOON: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether, and, if so, to what extent, it would be open to the Government of the Porte to alienate any portion of the increased Customs duties sanctioned by the Powers in providing the kilometric guarantee now being sought by Germany for the purpose of the extension of the Bagdad Railway.

SIR EDWARD GREY: All revenue which the Turkish Government derives from the increased Customs duties is definitely appropriated to the Macedonian Budget. It is therefore not open to the Porte to alienate any portion of it.

MR. LYNCH (Yorkshire, W.R., Ripon) asked if there was not an understanding with Germany as to what was to be done with the revenue thus set free.

SIR EDWARD GREY: I do not know anything about such an understanding, nor do I see anything in the Question about this particular revenue.

MR. BOWLES was understood to ask to ask if it was not in the power of the

Porte to dispose of any revenue arising from the increased Customs duties.

SIR EDWARD GREY : It can dispose of revenues as to which it is under no obligation.

The Aland Islands.

MR. LONSDALE: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the special Convention of March, 1856, which was annexed to the Treaty of Paris and concluded between Great Britain and France and Russia, in regard to the Aland Islands, remains unaffected by the new agreement for the preservation of the *status quo* in the Baltic.

SIR EDWARD GREY: The Answer is in the affirmative.

Russian Sugar Stores.

MR. VILLIERS (Brighton): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether, since the prohibition of Russian sugar into Great Britain by the Sugar Convention of 1902, 500,000 tons of sugar have accumulated in Russia.

SIR EDWARD GREY: The stocks of Russian sugar on the 1st of September last, according to trade estimates, amounted to 514,000 tons. The accumulation in question is primarily due to the heavy beet crops of the preceding two years.

MR. VILLIERS: Did the Government agree to the renewal of the con vention knowing that the other Powers had imposed a restriction on Russia in relation to her exports to Great Britain?

SIR EDWARD GREY: That Question was practically answered yesterday.

Russia and the Brussels Convention

MR. VILLIERS: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether, by the terms of the Sugar Convention, to the renewal of which His Majesty's Government has lately consented, the introduction of Russian sugar into Great Britain is to be limited.

SIR EDWARD GREY: The assent of His Majesty's Government is limited to the provisions of the protocol which enable Russia to adhere to the Convention. His Majesty's Government have not undertaken any obligation with regard to the arrangement between Russia and the other producing countries; it is clearly one which could have been made independently of their consent. I may further point out with regard to the probable effect upon the import of sugar into the United Kingdom, that before the Convention the average import from Russia was probably less than 40,000 tons a year, and that under the arrangement between Russia and the other countries an annual average import up to 200,000 tons is possible. But, in any case, the freedom of His Majesty's Government to admit sugar sent to this country for import is not restricted.

*MR. VILLIERS: Does the right hon. Gentleman maintain that in agreeing to the renewal of this Convention the Government was not a party to the limitation of exports of Russian sugar into Great Britain by that same Convention?

SIR EDWARD GREY: We undertook no obligation in regard to that particular provision. What we did obtain was freedom from all restriction as to our power to import.

Crime in Egypt.

MR. J. M. ROBERTSON (Northumberland, Tyneside): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether His Majesty's Government has received from the Consul-General at Cairo information as to the recent increase of crime in Egypt, and notably in the Behera district; and what effective steps, if any, are now being taken to put a check on the murder, robbery, arson, and other serious offences, which Lord Cromer, on page 85 of his Annual Report for 1906, described as the most unsatisfactory feature in the Egyptian situation.

SIR EDWARD GREY: The Question is dealt with in Sir Eldon Gorst's Report for 1907 (on pages 22, 23, and 29), which will, it is hoped, be laid before Parliament on Monday next.

International Legislative Council for Egypt.

MR. J. M. ROBERTSON: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs when it is expected that Sir

Eldon Gorst's Report on the Administration and Condition of Egypt and the Sudan in 1907 will be issued as a Parliamentary Paper; and whether in it, or through some other official channel, information will be given as to the result of the proposals for modifying the capitulations and establishing an International Legislative Council, which were set forth in Lord Cromer's Report for 1906; also as to other measures promised with a view to removing present anomalies and difficulties in the government of Egypt.

SIR EDWARD GREY: It is hoped to lay Sir Eldon Gorst's Report for 1907 before Parliament on Monday next, May 4th. Information as to the present situation with regard to Lord Cromer's proposals for modifying the capitulations and establishing an International Legislative Council will be found on pages 1 and 2 of that Paper.

The Budget—Broadening the Basis of Revenue.

MR. BOTTOMLEY: I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, with a view to broadening the sources of revenue within the limits of the present fiscal policy of the country, he will consider the expediency of taxing advertisements, introducing a graduated receipt stamp, imposing a stamp duty on share certificates, taxing betting and racing stakes, establishing an employment tax of a penny in the pound on all wages paid; and taxing theatre and other amusement tickets beyond a given price.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (MR. LLOYD-GEORGE, Carnarvon Boroughs): I will reflect upon my hon. friend's suggestions.

MR. BOTTOMLEY: I will repeat the Question after allowing the right hon. gentleman a reasonable period for reflection.

Income-Tax on Investments Abroad.

SIR EDWARD SASSOON: I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he will state the amount of income-tax received during the fiscal year now closed on profits and income resulting from investments abroad, the amounts on which the tax was received, discriminating between those earned in foreign countries and those from British Possessions; and whether there has been any increase or decrease as compared with the figures of the previous year.

*MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: It will be seen from pages 216–7 of the 50th Report of the Commissioners of Inland Revenue, that it is impossible to give any complete figures of profits and income resulting from investments abroad. The gross income from abroad brought under review for income-tax purposes, so far as it can be identified in the statistics of the tax, amounted in 1906-7 (the latest year for which figures are available) to £79,558,000. The corresponding figure for the preceding year was £73,899,200. Information is not available with regard to the other points raised by the hon. Baronet.

SIR EDWARD SASSOON: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman, arising out of the reply he has just given, whether these £5,500,000 increase in the profits earned from capital placed abroad does not represent a capitalised sum of £150,000,000 in one year, and whether he views without alarm the increasing tendency of British capital to seek investment in foreign countries, with the resulting contraction of employment at home?

*MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: I should have thought the hon. Baronet would know that the figure does not represent so large an increase of capital invested abroad. It represents, to a great extent, very largely increased returns from investments.

Night Wanderers in London.

MR. BOTTOMLEY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether, as stated by a police official in the course of some recent legal proceedings, the police have instructions to wake up all persons found asleep on public seats during the night; and, if so, whether he will consider the expediency of annulling or modifying such instructions?

THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (MR. HERBERT SAMUEL, Yorkshire, Cleveland): It is the practice for the police to wake persons found sleeping at night on public seats and to direct them to the nearest shelter or casual ward. It is undesirable that public seats should be used as sleeping places, and the Secretary of State does not think any alteration in the regulations should be made.

MR. CROOKS: Why should not they sleep there?

MR. BYLES (Salford, N.): I should like to know under what Act of Parliament men are harried and very often punished for the wholesome practice of sleeping in the open air.

MR. HERBERT SAMUEL: Under their general powers the police are empowered to take action against persons who are found committing the offence known as "sleeping out."

MR. CROOKS: Is the hon. Gentleman aware of the law that allows a man to sleep in the open if he has the price of a lodging in his pocket, whereas it is the poor fellow with nothing who is moved on?

MR. BOTTOMLEY: Can the hon. Gentleman tell us what difference it makes to the police or to the public whether a man who occupies a seat in the middle of the night is asleep or awake?

MR. ASHLEY: Has the Home Secretary power to do away with this regulation?

MR. HERBERT SAMUEL asked for notice.

Motor 'Buses in London.

SIR HENRY CRAIK (Glasgow and Aberdeen University): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what is the total number of motor omnibuses now running in London, and what is the number of the staff employed in their inspection; and whether the ordinary police constables are charged with any duty of observing and reporting cases of serious nuisance caused by these omnibuses through smell, smoke, or undue vibration due to defective machinery?

MR. HERBERT SAMUEL: There were on the 27th instant 1,137 licensed motor omnibuses. The public carriage inspecting staff consists of 37 officers, whose duty includes the supervision of motor omnibuses. Police on ordinary duty report cases of defective omnibuses coming to their notice.

SIR HENRY CRAIK: Is the hon. Gentleman aware that the ordinary policeman disclaims any such duty as part of his ordinary duties?

MR. HERBERT SAMUEL: I am not aware of that.

North Camberwell Radical Club.

*CAPTAIN FABER (Hampshire, Andover): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the inquest held on Tuesday, 28th January, on R. C. Drummond, who was proved to have died from syncope from delirium caused by a fall at one o'clock on a Sunday morning in the North Camberwell Radical Club, and whose death was proved to have been accelerated by long-continued alcoholic excesses; and whether he can insert provisions in the Licensing Bill to prevent the excessive consumption of drink in such clubs.

MR. HERBERT SAMUEL: My right hon. friend has not had before him the facts of the case mentioned, and is unable to say whether or not the alcoholic excesses which are stated to have accelerated the death took place in a club. The question of legislative restrictions on the sale of liquor in clubs is receiving the full attention of the House in the debates on the Licensing Bill, and I would venture to suggest can be discussed in those debates with greater advantage than by way of Question and Answer.

*CAPTAIN FABER: May I ask the hon. Gentleman whether he would think it desirable to take steps against this club which, in the words of the Prime Minister, appears to be "a vicious drinking club?"

MR. HERBERT SAMUEL: That is a matter of opinion.

EARL WINTERTON (Sussex, Horsham): Having regard to the allegations which have been made against this club, will the hon. Gentleman consider the desirability of instructing a detective-inspector of the Metropolitan Police to enter the club disguised as a temperance reformer?

An Hon. MEMBER: As a tariff reformer.

Mr. HERBERT SAMUEL: There is no power at present to enter a club except under a warrant, but it is proposed to remedy that by the Licensing Bill.

Mr. CLAUDE HAY (Shoreditch, Hoxton): Will the hon. Gentleman consider the advisability of consulting the president of this club, who, I believe, is the Parliamentary Secretary to the Admiralty?

[No Answer was returned.]

Royal Warrant Holders.

Mr. CLAUDE HAY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps are taken to ascertain the rates of pay and working conditions generally obtaining in firms whom it is intended to honour with the Royal Warrant; and if measures are taken with a view of ensuring the observance of trade union conditions by firms upon whom the Royal Warrant is confirmed?

Mr. HERBERT SAMUEL: Grants of Royal Warrants to particular firms are not made by or on the recommendation of the Home Office. The Secretary of State understands that it is not the practice to impose any conditions upon the firms in receipt of them.

Mr. CLAUDE HAY: Will the right hon. Gentleman take steps to make representation in the right quarter on the matter set forth in the Question?

Mr. HERBERT SAMUEL: Yes, I will communicate the hon. Member's suggestion.

Tailoring Industry and the Particulars Clause.

Mr. CLAUDE HAY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if he will state when the Particulars Clause was extended to the tailoring industry; how many prosecutions have been instituted for breaches of the same; whether, during the last year, he has received complaints respecting the non-observance of the provisions of the clause, involving a very large number of persons engaged in the tailoring trade; and what is the result of the investigations, if any, made in consequence thereof.

Mr. HERBERT SAMUEL: The Particulars Section of the Factory Act was extended to wholesale tailoring in 1898 and to other tailoring in 1903. The Secretary of State has not been able in the short interval since the Question appeared on the Paper, to obtain full statistics of prosecutions in the tailoring trades; but, excluding ladies' tailoring, it appears that since 1903, fifteen cases have been taken, resulting in twelve convictions. The answer to the last part of the Question as to complaints is in the negative.

Mr. CLAUDE HAY: Is the hon. Gentleman aware that though the number of cases is small, the number of persons affected is over 1,000?

Mr. HERBERT SAMUEL: No, Sir.

The Aliens Act.

Mr. CLAUDE HAY: I beg to ask the Prime Minister if the pledges in regard to the alteration of regulations under The Aliens Act, 1905, given by the President of the Board of Trade to his late constituents at Manchester, represent the views of His Majesty's Government; and, if so, when these regulations will be issued.

Mr. HERBERT SAMUEL: I beg leave to answer this Question. The statements made on behalf of His Majesty's Government by the President of the Board of Trade involve partly administrative and partly legislative action, but not the issue of fresh regulations as is suggested in the question. The provision of receiving houses at immigration ports where clear necessity can be shown must be recognised to be an essential part of the machinery of the Act; and power is taken in the Port of London Bill, which is under the charge of the President of the Board of Trade, to enable such a house to be established in London, the port at which difficulty has arisen. The question of according to an immigrant the right of appeal to the High Court is a matter which requires legislation, and is under consideration. My right hon. friend also repeated in emphatic terms the promises already given by the Home Secretary to adopt any suggestions which will, in his opinion, improve the composition of the Immigration Boards, or any suggestions for remedying defects in the arrangements for the interpretation of evidence and representation of aliens. These pledges stand, but they affect only administration, and do not involve any new regulations.

MR. CLAUDE HAY: May I ask the hon. Gentleman to reply to my Question with reference to the reduction of naturalisation fees? The President of the Board of Trade stated at Manchester on March 25th that he spoke with the authority of his colleagues, and that, though the late Cabinet had not seen their way to reduce the naturalisation fees, that circumstance did not bind the present Cabinet. Is it intended, in accordance with the declaration of the President of the Board of Trade, to reduce naturalisation fees?

MR. HERBERT SAMUEL: That does not in any way arise out of the Question on the Paper.

MR. LEVERTON HARRIS (Tower Hamlets, Stepney): Is it proposed to add to the boards members who are agreeable to the Christian community as well as members who are agreeable to the Jewish community?

MR. HERBERT SAMUEL: In cases where their present composition is defective it is proposed to make the boards thoroughly representative of all sections of the community.

MR. CLAUDE HAY: Not having received a reply to my Question, I beg to give notice that I shall put a series of Questions with the object of getting a reply.

Workmen's Insurance.

MR. CHARLES McARTHUR (Liverpool, Kirkdale): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether he is aware that in some employments workmen who are subject to a physical defect, but have nevertheless performed their duties to the full satisfaction of their employers, are being discharged by the latter because the insurance companies refuse to insure them on ordinary terms against risks under the Workmen's Compensation Act; and whether he purposes to take any steps, by legislation or otherwise, to deal with the case of workmen thrown out of employment by this cause.

MR. HERBERT SAMUEL: The Secretary of State has been informed that in some cases workmen subject to a physical defect have been discharged on account of alleged difficulties of insuring them. The refusal to insure such men is not universal among insurance companies and there does not appear any reason why such men should not be insured upon adequate terms as well as other workmen. Further inquiries will be made into the matter.

MR. CROOKS: Will the hon. Gentleman instruct the Public Prosecutor to take action under the law of intimidation? What right have the insurance companies to do this?

AN HON. MEMBER: Is there any evidence whatever that insurance companies do ask questions of employers with regard to the physical defects of those employed?

MR. HERBERT SAMUEL: There have been cases where they have refused to insure such men, but it is not by any means the universal practice.

Motor Fatalities.—Misuse of High Roads.

MR. CATHCART WASON (Orkney and Shetland): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been drawn to three recent cases at Kenley, Albourne (on the Brighton Road), and at St. Albans, respectively, in which a motorist, after a serious accident, in two of the cases fatal, ran away without stopping, in contravention of Section 6 of The Motor Car Act, 1903; whether he is aware that these are not isolated cases; and whether, without waiting for general legislation, he will take immediate steps to strengthen the law by imposing heavier penalties for this class of offence.

MR. CHIOZZA MONEY: At the same time may I ask the President of the Local Government Board if his attention has been directed to the fact that early on Saturday morning, 25th April, a man named John Bryan was knocked down, killed, and abandoned on the road between Guildford and Ripley by a motor car of unknown identity; if he is aware that a considerable number of such cases have occurred recently, and that the misuse of public high roads by motorists is increasing; and whether he can definitely promise drastic legislation to suppress these evils.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. John Burns, Battersea): My right hon. friend has asked me to reply to these Questions. I regret to say that cases of the kind mentioned in them have occurred. I would point out that under section 6 of The Motor Act, 1903, a person who is driving a motor car is bound to stop if an accident occurs to anyone, and if required he must give his name and address. Further, that if he causes the accident he may render himself liable to penalties considerably heavier than those imposed for non-compliance with the section. In the Kenley case a man was arrested and charged with manslaughter. I will, however, consider whether some amendment should be made in the law with regard to this point.

Viscount Portman's Marylebone Property.

MR. CHIOZZA MONEY: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board if his attention has been directed to the fact that some twenty-five mews and yards in Marylebone have recently been claimed by Viscount Portman as his private property, although they have been for nearly a century drained, paved, cleansed, and lighted by the public authority, which has exercised in regard to them precisely the same powers which it has exercised over other local public places; and whether he is taking any action in the matter.

MR. JOHN BURNS: I have made inquiry and am informed that there has been litigation between Lord Portman and the Borough Council on this subject, and that judgment has been given against the Council. The fact that the Borough Council or their predecessors have paved and lighted the mews which was the subject of the litigation, was brought under the notice of the Court. I presume that the decision of the Court will govern other cases of the same kind as that to which it related, but the Borough Council have resolved to deal with each mews in turn when the freeholder proposes to enclose it. The matter is not one with respect to which I can take any action.

Shetland Mail Service.

MR. CATHCART WASON: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General if he has received a memorandum from the North Isles District Committee, Shetland, pointing out how, by a simple re-arrangement of the service and without any additional cost to the Post Office, a much more satisfactory mail service could be obtained; if he has replied to the said memorial; and what is the nature of the reply.

THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Mr. Sydney Buxton, Tower Hamlets, Poplar): I have received the Memorial referred to and I am communicating with the hon. Member on the subject.

Post Office Savings Bank—Telegraphic Withdrawals.

MR. H. H. MARKS: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether the regulation permitting depositors in Post Office savings banks to withdraw sums not exceeding one pound on presentation of a deposit book showing that amount to their credit, at any post office where savings bank business is transacted, has led to the perpetration of frauds on the Post Office; and, if so, what steps he proposes to take to prevent the recurrence of such frauds.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: Occasionally frauds have occurred in connection with the regulation to which the hon. Member refers. The loss which fell upon the Post Office funds in consequence of such frauds between 3rd July, 1905 (the date on which the regulation came into force) and the 31st December was about two-thirds of a penny on every £100 withdrawn "on demand" — a trifling amount when weighed against the advantage which depositors have derived from the system. It would be inexpedient to make public the nature of the precautions which are taken against the recurrence of frauds, inasmuch as their object would thereby be to a large extent defeated.

Telephone Instruments.

SIR EDWARD SASSOON: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General if he is aware that no restrictions exist in France as regards the choice of telephone instruments; and, in view of the danger to health involved in the use of receivers insisted upon by the telephone company, will he take steps to allow the public the same freedom of selection as is allowed in France.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: Telephone subscribers in France are required to purchase their own telephone instruments, and hence their choice is not restricted. The consequent lack of uniformity of apparatus and the great number of cheap and often inefficient instruments in use constitute one of the causes alleged for defects in the French telephone service; and I do not think that a satisfactory telephone service could be carried on in this country under such conditions. I am assured that there is no danger to health arising from the types of telephone officially provided in the United Kingdom.

SIR EDWARD SASSOON: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the National Telephone Company absolutely refuse to allow persons to choose their own instruments?

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: I think they do so on the ground that the instruments they provide are the best in the market.

Telegraphic Codes.

SIR EDWARD SASSOON: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that the proposal to abrogate Clause 8 of the Postal Convention would inflict a serious loss on the commercial community by rendering obsolete codes prepared at considerable cost; and whether he will instruct the British delegate to offer strenuous resistance to any whittling away of the right to use invented pronounceable words enjoyed for many years past without question.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: No proposal has been made to abrogate the right of sending artificial pronounceable combinations in code telegrams given by Article VIII. of the International Telegraph Regulations, to which I understand the hon. Member to refer, and certainly no such proposal, if made, would be supported by the British delegates at the International Telegraph Conference at Lisbon. It is, I think, desirable for practical reasons that the condition as to pronounceability should be somewhat more clearly defined, but there is no intention of adopting other than a generous interpretation which would cover the great bulk of the codes in use.

Rhymney Valley Postmen.

MR. CLAUDE HAY: I beg to ask the Postmaster General whether he will grant the scale of pay asked for by the postmen employed at the sub-offices in the Rhymney Valley; and, if not, whether he has decided that the scale of pay of 18s. to 21s. per week is sufficient for these postmen to maintain their wives and families in a district where the cost of living is high.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: It has not yet been definitely decided into which classes the sub-offices in the Rhymney Valley should be placed. All the circumstances will be taken into consideration before the final classification is settled.

Foreigners in the Telephone Service.

MR. CLAUDE HAY: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether foreigners have been appointed as night operators in the State telephone service in London; if so, whether they have been naturalised; and whether no capable linguists exist among the present staff.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: There are at present two Frenchmen among the staff by whom the continental telephone lines are worked at night. I understand they have not been naturalised. There are four or five Englishmen who assist in working the lines in question; but all of them have not as great facility in colloquial French as is desirable in the interests of users of the telephone.

MR. CLAUDE HAY: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that some time ago notice was issued by his Department to the effect that no more foreigners were to be employed at the Post Office, whereas two Frenchmen have been appointed on the Trunk Exchange and four more are about to be appointed?

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: I had better have notice of the Question in regard to specific cases. But as a general rule, while we would naturally employ British subjects, there may be cases where it would be to the advantage of the public to employ foreigners.

Letter Delays.

Mr. CLAUDE HAY: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether his non-liability for delaying letters and telegrams and for other acts of Post Office servants extends to Post Office servants themselves; and, if not, whether, in cases where persons have suffered damage or injury at the hands of one of his servants, he will disclose the name of that servant; and, if not, will he explain why.

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON: The question is at present under consideration.

Wolverhampton Teacher's Examination.

Mr. BOTTOMLEY: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education whether, at the last preliminary examination for the certificate, a candidate from Wolverhampton was failed; whether the local education authority for Wolverhampton wrote to the Board of Education expressing their surprise and pointing out that the candidate had passed the Birmingham Matriculation; whether it has been discovered that the examiner had accidentally given only a portion of the right marks to this and several other candidates; whether the Board of Education declines to give the local education authority any information on the subject; whether the examiner in question has been censured or in any way punished; and what steps the Board propose to take to rectify the injury inflicted upon the candidate by the negligence of that officer?

The PRESIDENT of the BOARD of EDUCATION (Mr. Runciman, Dewsbury): The local authority for Wolverhampton wrote to the Board expressing surprise at the failure of two of their candidates in the examination referred to. They stated that one of the candidates had passed the Matriculation Examination of Birmingham University, and asked whether the Board could give any information regarding the subjects in which they had failed. The Board replied on the 8th April that it was not their practice to give such information. I may say that neither of these candidates lost through an accident on the part of the examiner any marks which would otherwise have been awarded to them. If the hon. Member can furnish me with the names of any candidates believed to have lost marks in this way I will see that their cases are investigated.

Wiltshire Education Authority.

Dr. RUTHERFORD (Middlesex, Brentford): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education, whether he will direct the Wiltshire Education Authority to provide at once a temporary council school, in order to supply the deficiency of school places at Westbury Leigh, and decline to sanction the proposal to provide a second church school for a population which is predominantly Nonconformist.

Mr. RUNCIMAN: This question is under consideration, and I am not in a position to make any statement at present.

Civil Service Salary Increments.

Mr. CLAUDE HAY: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether a certificate of punctuality and good conduct has to be given before an increment of salary is granted; whether the form of this certificate is uniform for all classes of civil servants; what are its terms; and when they were settled.

Mr. CHARLES HOBHOUSE: The Answer to the first part of the Question is in the affirmative. Clause 20 of the Order in Council of the 29th November, 1898, prescribes that "an annual increment of salary shall not be allowed to any person in the established Civil Service of the State without a certificate from the immediate superior of such person, countersigned by the head of the Department or such officer as he may designate for the purpose, to the effect that such person's conduct has during the year immediately preceding the date of such certificate been approved."

Kitchen Committee's Accounts.

Mr. MORTON (Sutherland): I beg to ask the hon. Member for Mid-Derbyshire, as Chairman of the Kitchen Committee, whether the Kitchen Committee have yet arranged to issue a complete annual Return of receipts and expenditure.

Sir A. JACOBY (Derbyshire, Mid.): In reply to my hon. friend, the matter is receiving the attention of the Kitchen Committee.

Sanitation at Scottish Whaling Stations.

Mr. CATHCART WASON: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland what steps the Fishery Board for Scotland are taking to insist that sanitation and cleanliness will be rigorously carried out at the whaling stations, and especially if masses of decaying matter will be consumed by fire or chemicals, and not allowed to float about the voes, destroying the mussel beds and gravely injuring the homes of the people.

The SECRETARY for SCOTLAND (Mr. Sinclair, Forfarshire): The duty of seeing that these stations are kept in a sanitary condition is primarily a matter for the local authority and their officers, and in the event of their default it will be the duty of the Local Government Board to interfere. I may add that the bye-laws framed by the local authorities for regulating the business carried on at these stations provide for the prevention of offensive material being deposited in or allowed to escape into the sea.

Mr. CATHCART WASON: The Board can grant a subsidy for fishery cruisers; can it not also give local authorities one for this object?

Mr. SINCLAIR: We have no authority to do so under the statute.

Ollaberry Grazing Lands, Shetlands.

Mr. CATHCART WASON: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland if he is aware that the late Mr. Alexander Blance, of Gluss, Ollaberry, Shetland, applied years ago to the Crofters' Commission to divide a certain area of grazing land; that some years after, in 1904, the Crofters Commission inspected the land in question and have since then taken no action; and if he will take the necessary steps to get this case settled without further delay.

Mr. SINCLAIR: An application by Alexander Blance, Gluss, Ollaberry, and others to divide a certain area of Scattald or common grazing lands into blocks for individual occupancy was heard by the Commissioners in 1904, and an inspection of the subjects made. It was, however, afterwards found that further inquiry was necessary, but owing to unavoidable circumstances it was impossible for the Commissioners to make such inquiry up to the present time. It is their intention to visit Shetland during the coming season, when the application in question will fall to be disposed of.

Shetland Herring Fishery.

Mr. MORTON: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether he is aware that the herring fishery industry of the west coast of Shetland has been practically destroyed by the whaling business; whether he will take steps to protect what is left of the herring fishing at Shetland; whether he is aware that the fishermen who are being deprived of their employment mostly belong to the Royal Naval Reserve; and whether he is aware that if the herring fishing industry at Shetland is destroyed, as it is threatened, a valuable training ground for the Navy will be lost.

Mr. SINCLAIR: I am unable to accept as accurate the assertions made by my hon. friend in this Question. The restrictions imposed by the Whaling Act of last year, under which statutory authority to deal with this matter is provided, will be strictly enforced.

Foreign Trawlers in the Moray Firth.

Captain WARING (Banffshire): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether the proposals to prevent trawling by foreign vessels in the Moray Firth have yet been submitted to the Foreign Powers concerned; and when he will be in a position to make a statement on the matter.

Mr. SINCLAIR: Not yet, Sir. I am not at present able to say.

Captain WARING: When will the right hon. Gentleman be in a position to make a statement?

Mr. SINCLAIR: I cannot say. It is an elaborate matter involving consideration by several Departments before the Government can come to a decision.

Earl WINTERTON: And meanwhile great damage is being done.

Mr. STANLEY WILSON (Yorkshire, E.R., Holderness): Will the right hon.

Gentleman consider the desirability of giving to English fishermen the same rights in these waters as foreigners have?

MR. SINCLAIR: My views on the matter are before the House.

Bushmills Sub-Postmaster.

CAPTAIN CRAIG (Down, E.): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General if his attention has been called to the action taken by the postmaster, Mr. Alexander Park, at Bushmills, in respect of the pension warrant of Mr. Hugh McFaull, by refusing as postmaster to deliver the pension warrant to McFaull unless he assented to the deduction by the postmaster of a debt of 17s. due to him in his private capacity as a draper; if the postmaster was justified by the rules of the Department in so acting; and, if not, what steps will be taken to secure that pensions in Bushmills and elsewhere will reach those entitled without illegal deductions.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: I wrote to the hon. Member recently informing him that in paying Mr. McFaull's pension on the 1st January last, the Sub-Postmaster of Bushmills improperly deducted 17s. 2d. in respect of a debt for goods obtained in his shop. The matter was taken up at the time, on a complaint made by Mr. McFaull, and the Sub-Postmaster was reprimanded for his irregular action and required to make good the amount to the pensioner. I have no doubt that the notice which has been taken of the case will prevent cause being given for any similar complaint in future.

Education Bill—Mr. Churchill's Pledges.

MR. LYTTELTON (St. George's, Hanover Square): I beg to ask the Prime Minister if the pledges with regard to the education question given by the President of the Board of Trade to his late constituents at Manchester represent the views of His Majesty's Government; and, if so, whether they intend to proceed with the Education Bill now before the House.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. ASQUITH, Fife, E): The statements on this subject, so far as I know, made by the President of the Board of Trade at Manchester, merely repeated in his own language opinions expressed on previous occasions by other members of the Government, and there is nothing in them which would prevent the Government from proceeding with the Education Bill. The Second Reading stage of it will be taken in due course.

MR. WALTER LONG (Dublin, S.): May I ask whether in the constitution of the new Cabinet there has been a rearrangement of the old rule that any statement made by a Cabinet Minister on behalf of his colleagues is binding on the whole Cabinet?

MR. ASQUITH: With all respect to the right hon. Gentleman, I do not see how that Question arises out of the Answer. I said that the statement made by the President of the Board of Trade merely repeated in his own language opinions expressed on previous occasions——

MR. WALTER LONG: In his own language?

MR. ASQUITH: May not he choose his own language?

MR. STANLEY WILSON: Is it not a fact that the President of the Board of Education went to Dewsbury with a message of peace, and was the Education Bill that message of peace?

SIR PHILIP MAGNUS (London University): Can the Prime Minister fix a date now for the Second Reading of the Education Bill?

MR. R. DUNCAN (Lanarkshire, Govan): Who expressed the opinions to which the Prime Minister referred?

MR. ASQUITH: Various members of the Government; among others, my noble friend Lord Crewe.

Mr. Churchill's Home Rule Pledges.

MR. WALTER LONG: I beg to ask the Prime Minister if the pledges on the Home Rule question given by the President of the Board of Trade to his late constituents at Manchester have his sanction and authority; and, if so, whether he will give the House of Commons an opportunity of discussing this change in policy by His Majesty's Government.

Mr. ASQUITH: There has been and is no change in the policy of His Majesty's Government, which was fully explained by the Chief Secretary and myself in this House on the 30th March last. I did not authorise my right hon. friend, and I am satisfied after acquainting myself with the substance of his speeches that he did not make any statement in Manchester which was in any way inconsistent with the previous declarations of the Government.

Mr. WALTER LONG: Is the Prime Minister not aware that the President of the Board of Trade said definitely at Manchester that great misunderstanding had arisen with regard to the language used by the Prime Minister in the House of Commons upon the occasion referred to, and that he had the authority of the Prime Minister to explain that those misapprehensions were not justified and to assume a line with regard to the next election which was not adopted by the Prime Minister here? The interpretation which has been placed on the right hon. Gentleman's language is not confined to one party or one section.

Mr. ASQUITH: I am not responsible for the interpretation put on the language of my right hon. friend. Although I am a great admirer and diligent student of his speeches, I have not read everything he said at Manchester. But I know the passage to which the right hon. Gentleman referred. So far as I know he did not say anything there which I had not expressly or by plain implication said in my speech.

Mr. LEVERTON HARRIS: Is the House to understand that the statements made by the President of the Board of Trade at Manchester represent the policy of the Government?

Mr. ASQUITH: The statement referred to by the right hon. Gentleman opposite is, I have said, perfectly consistent with and not repugnant to what I have said in this House, and, therefore, it does represent the views of the Government.

Mr. PIKE PEASE (Darlington): Is the Prime Minister aware that the speech he made in the House of Commons and the speech made by the Chief Secretary for Ireland did not satisfy the Irish Party, and that the speech of the President of the Board of Trade did satisfy the Irish Party?

Mr. ASQUITH made a reply which was inaudible in the Gallery.

Mr. STANLEY WILSON: Is the Prime Minister going to allow the President of the Board of Trade to make similar pledges to the electors at Dundee?

[No Answer was returned.]

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS (Kent, St. Augustine's): What will be the business for Tuesday and Wednesday next?

Mr. ASQUITH: The business for next week will be as follows: Monday—Conclusion of Debate on Licensing Bill; Tuesday—Second Reading of the Scottish Education Bill; Wednesday — Second Reading of the Port of London Bill; Thursday—Introduction of the Budget.

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).

Sir William Brampton Gurdon reported from the Committee of Selection: That they had added to Standing Committee A the following fifteen Members (in respect of the Coroners' Inquests Bill): Sir Frederick Banbury, Viscount Helmsley, Mr. Fitzalan Hope, Sir Edward Boyle, Mr. Higham, Mr. Luke White, Mr. Arthur Henderson, Mr. Summerbell, Mr. Toulmin, Mr. Cameron, Mr. Ffrench, Mr. Augustine Roche, Mr. John Ward, Mr. Edmund Lamb, and Mr. Charles Duncan.

Sir William Brampton Gurdon further reported from the Committee: That they had added to Standing Committee A the following fifteen Members (in respect of the Summary Jurisdiction (Ireland) Bill): Marquess of Hamilton, Mr. Moore, Mr. Fetherstonhaugh, Mr. Thomas Corbett, Earl of Kerry, Mr. MacCaw, Captain Kincaid-Smith, Mr. Clough, Mr. Kettle, Mr. Thomas O'Donnell, Mr. John O'Connor, Mr. Hazleton, Mr. Belloc, Mr. Henry, and Mr. Albert Stanley.

Sir William Brampton Gurdon further reported from the Committee: That they had discharged the following Member from Standing Committee B: The Lord Advocate; and had appointed in substitution (in respect of the Children Bill): Mr. Solicitor-General for Scotland.

Sir WILLIAM BRAMPTON GURDON further reported from the Committee: That they had discharged the following Member from Standing Committee B: Mr. Parker; and had reinstated Mr. Austen Taylor.

Sir WILLIAM BRAMPTON GURDON further reported from the Committee: that they had discharged the following Members from Standing Committee B (in respect of the Children Bill): Sir Joseph Leese and Mr. Llewellyn Williams; and had appointed in substitution (in respect of the Children Bill) Mr. Ramsay Macdonald and Mr. Leif Jones.

Sir WILLIAM BRAMPTON GURDON further reported from the Committee: that they had discharged the following Member from Standing Committee C (in respect of the Costs in Criminal Cases Bill): Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, and had appointed in substitution (in respect of the Costs in Criminal Cases Bill) Mr. Solicitor-General.

Sir WILLIAM BRAMPTON GURDON further reported from the Committee: that they had added to Standing Committee C the following fifteen Members (in respect of the Costs in Criminal Cases Bill): Captain Morrison-Bell, Mr. Joynson-Hicks, Mr. Rawlinson, Mr. Fell, Mr Kennedy, Mr. Lardner, Mr. John Williams, Mr. Boulton, Mr. Herbert, Mr. King, Mr. Ernest Lamb, Mr. Armitage, Mr. Markham, Mr. Hay Morgan, and Mr. Ellis Davies.

Reports to lie upon the Table.

NEW BILLS.

EDUCATION (CONSOLIDATION AND AMENDMENT) BILL.

"To consolidate and amend the Education Act," presented by Mr. Wedgwood; to be read a second time upon Thursday next, and to be printed. [Bill 206.]

FACTORY AND WORKSHOP ACT (1901) AMENDMENT BILL.

"To prohibit employment between noon on Saturday and six o'clock on Monday morning in cotton, woollen, worsted, flax, hemp, silk, jute, and paper factories, and in bleaching and dyeing works," presented by Mr. Jowett; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 207.]

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (SUPPLY).

Ordered, That the proceedings on the Licensing Bill have precedence this day of the Business of Supply.—(*Mr. Asquith.*)

LICENSING BILL.

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment to Question [28th April], "That the Bill be now read a second time":—

Which Amendment was,

> "To leave out from the word 'That,' to the end of the Question, in order to add the words 'this House declines to proceed further with a measure which, while failing to promote the cause of temperance, violates the principles of equity,'—(*Mr. Cave,*)—instead thereof."

Question again proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

*MR. GEORGE FABER (York): When the debate was interrupted last evening I was endeavouring to establish that there was no warranty for the two propositions at the root of this measure—first, the wholesale reduction of licences during the next fourteen years, and at the conclusion of those fourteen years the resumption by the State of the monopoly value of all the remaining licences. As regards the first of those two propositions, I venture to say that there is nothing to be found anywhere in the judgments in "Sharp *v.* Wakefield" to support it. An hon. Gentleman sitting below the gangway yesterday questioned this, but I have read the judgments many times, and can say with confidence to the House that the observation I made last night on that decision is fully warranted by the facts. "Sharp *v.* Wakefield" laid down that it was in the power of the licensing magistrates to suppress a licence at the end of any year on the ground of superfluity, but the Judges expressly said that each case must be decided on its own particular merits and upon nothing else, that the decision in fact must be based upon the particular circumstances surrounding the particular case. The present Bill does not proceed in any way on those lines, and no doubt it does not intend to. Do not then let any hon. Member quote "Sharp *v.* Wakefield" in support of this arbitrary reduction of licences. The time-limit proposed by this Bill seems to me, apart altogether from the question of the recovery of the monopoly value, to be a bad proposition, and I think that the course followed by the Act of 1904 was superior in every respect, because under that Act there is elasticity, whilst here there is a cast-iron system that cannot be departed from in any instance. So many licences have got to be suppressed in so many districts in so many years. In fact the Government are setting up a bed of Procrustes in which the licensed properties of the country are to be laid. It does not matter whether the limbs are good or bad; if they do not accommodate themselves to the procrustean bed they are to be lopped off independently of whatever virtues they may be possessed of. Thus I venture to give a categorical answer to the question asked by the Prime Minister as to our views with regard to the time-limit. My views are entirely opposed to any time-limit. As regards the second proposition, which is a much more difficult one, and contains within itself the very core and kernel of the whole measure, and that is the recovery of the monopoly value of all licences left at the end of fourteen years by the State, where do the Government find any warranty for such a proposition? It is not even in the Minority Report of the Licensing Commission, let alone the Majority Report. All through the arguments, whenever it has been possible to do so, the Government have quoted the Minority Report, and here is one of the fundamental findings on this matter by the Minority Report. I cannot find a word in it about the recovery of monopoly value. They say, on page 268 of the Report—

> "We recommend the adoption of a term, say seven years, as the basis of a time for compensation arrangements under which the number of public-houses and beer-on-licences shall be everywhere reduced."

They do not go on to lay down any views as to the recovery of monopoly value; they stop short at the statutory maximum. In March, 1903, years after this expression of opinion, I find, from a recent quotation in *The Times* newspaper, that the Archbishop of Canterbury presided at a conference where influential gentlemen of all shades of opinion, including Lord Peel, were present, as well as many members of the trade, when a resolution was passed to the effect that

> "In order to facilitate the considerable reduction of licences, the conference was of opinion that provision should be made for compensation at interest for licensed property, dispossessed otherwise than for misconduct, from a fund raised by the trade, and that it was desirable that ante-1869 beerhouses should be placed on the same footing as other licensed houses."

Even a time-limit was not mentioned. The recovery of the monopoly value was never mentioned from first to last, and therefore I think I am warranted in saying again that the Government, in establishing this cardinal proposition of the recovery of the monopoly value by the State, have no precedent on which to found such an action. It rather reminds me of another phrase greatly in vogue among forward politicians below the gangway, viz., the nationalisation of all the means of production. I think the recovery of monopoly values and the nationalisation of all the means of production are born of the same father, and are half-brothers. The father is confiscation, while the mother of the one is plain speech and of the other subterfuge. About the one there is no possibility of doubt as to what it means. The Socialist Members below the gangway never hide their meaning, but upon the other there rests a certain veneer of respectability which makes it extremely dangerous, at any rate for the unwary. The Prime Minister in his speech a few days ago, and other speakers who followed him on the other side, were rather cruel and hard upon the great brewery interests of this country. I see sitting opposite me a right hon. Gentleman, the son of a great statesman who has passed away, Sir William Harcourt. What did he say on one of the many Licensing Bills, one of the many

Liquor Bills, brought forward by the other side, for the consideration of this House? In 1868 he said—

> "There is nothing in the world so cruel as the tender mercies of a real philanthropist."

When Sir William Harcourt was talking of the real philanthropist he was talking on a Liquor Bill, of temperance reformers; if he was alive to-day I think he would be able to go one better and say, "There is nothing in the world so cruel as the tender mercies of the real temperance reformer, coupled with the tender mercies of a Chancellor of the Exchequer looking out for money to provide for old-age pensions." Of course, we all know that there are brewery companies and brewery companies. Some have been inflated and some have not; some have had shares watered and some have not; but it does not go outside the bounds of comprehension that even an aerated water company should be brought forward as a company upon inflated lines. In fact, I often think the chief merit of aerated water is that peculiar inflated quality. It was, I think, the hon. Member for the Appleby Division of Westmoreland either yesterday or the day before, who was pleased to divide the parties in this House into the just and the unjust. He did not say the sheep and the goats, and perhaps I may be allowed to add to his definition in that respect. Humanity, either in this House or out of it, falls into no simple category of that kind. There are sheep and goats on both sides of the House, and, Mr. Speaker, I venture to say that if that over-confident judgment of the hon. Member was appealed against, and came up before you, Sir, for decision, I am not at all sure you would not reverse the position of the sheep and the goats, and put the sheep on your left hand and the goats on your right. Bearing on my remarks that there are companies and companies, I have a case in my hand which is directly upon this point, the case of an inflated brewery company. The company was promoted in 1897, and floated during that year with a capital of £500,000, £250,000 being issued in debentures, and £250,000 ordinary shares being retained by the vendors. ["Name."] I will state the name before I have finished. The company was refloated later in the same year, at £750,000, of which £250,000 were debentures, £250,000 pre-prefence stock, £150,000 preference stock, and £100,000 ordinary stock. In 1904 what do we find? We get this ominous sentence in the seventh annual statement—

> "The directors have for some time past been of opinion that it was necessary that some scheme of reconstruction of the company should be devised and carried through, having regard to the surrenders above referred to, and the high capitalisation of the company on former issue."

What happened? The company's capital is written down by no less a sum than £100,000, and the people who had to pay for that disagreeable operation were the ordinary shareholders. They did not like it, and when the meeting came on there was some demur. One gentleman asked the following question: "If the scheme of writing down the value of the company was carried out would the auditors give us any assurance that the property of the company was worth the amount given in the balance-sheet?" The answer given by Mr. Grimshaw, one of the auditors, was that that was hardly a fair question to put to the auditors; it would puzzle an expert to say what was the worth of the property, but he would say that the amount would be nearer the mark after the reduction of £100,000. Now, who is the fortunate vendor? I am sure hon. Gentlemen on the other side of the House are burning to know. Well, his name is Mr. George Whiteley, M.P. Let me at once disabuse the mind of this House of the idea that I have any sinister intention in bringing a matter of this sort forward. I do not blame the Patronage Secretary, but how is he going to answer to the high canon of morality that is set up by the other side of the House, and what answer has he got to make to his own Prime Minister, who has expressed himself so strongly regarding inflated breweries? I must leave it to the right hon. Gentleman to determine. Mr. Speaker, assuming that you do not interfere with the allocation of the sheep and the goats made by the hon. Member for the Appleby Division, and that the sheep still rest on your right hand, I am afraid the shepherd of the flock is going to have rather a difficult task when a division is called on Monday night, and he has got to drive the immaculate flock into the division lobby.

I do not forget that in those unregenerate days the right hon. Gentleman had not found salvation. Perhaps one of these days—who knows, it is a strange world—the right hon. Gentleman may find himself back among the goats. But seriously, does not this illustrate the folly of laying down any general proposition about inflated brewery companies and to found upon that the argument that if anybody is to blame for the hardships contained in this Bill, it is not the State, but the brewery companies, and if money has been lost it is the wicked brewery companies, and not the State, which is responsible. I may be stupid, I often think that I must be, but I cannot for the life of me follow the logic of that argument. I agree that if a shareholder has been foolish enough to put his money into a watered brewery company or a watered any other company, he deserves what he gets. He has got to "stew in his own juice," a phrase used by Sir William Harcourt, but because the shareholder has to stew in his own juice there is no reason why he is to be again put into the pot and on the fire and stewed in the Government's juice. Why should he stew twice over? Surely it is sufficient for the unfortunate shareholder to suffer for his own initial folly, and not have to suffer the confiscation which must follow, as certainly as night follows day, the course of procedure laid down by the Government in this Bill. When you come to the compensation clauses, and there let me speak quite simply as a business man, is it not a farce to call it compensation? Is the State paying one single farthing either during the compensation period, or at its conclusion—is it paying a single farthing for the 30,000 odd licences which are to be suppressed, or for the 60,000 remaining licences that are to be pouched by the State upon the conclusion of the fourteen years? Not one single farthing. You call that compensation, and you think you are going to take in the bishops and the confiding British public, by leading them to believe that the State is giving compensation for this gigantic property which it is proposed to take away. I can imagine hon. Gentlemen opposite saying, "Very well, but the Act of 1904 also provided that the trade, where licences were suppressed, should find the compensation." I agree, we did provide a precedent, but look how different the cases are. Under the Act of 1904, after providing for the suppression of licences, the monopoly was left to the trade, and you may fairly say that each suppression of a licence increased the monopoly, so that the trade which had paid for the suppression of licences were in a superior position as regards the licences that were left. That is logical, and the Act of 1904 proceeded on that basis. It was because the monopoly value was left to the trade and was not passed over to the State that the trade provided the compensation. But what is done here? The analogy does not apply. How can you call upon the trade during fourteen years to find compensation, when on the conclusion of that period the State is going to take over the remaining licences? There is not one farthing of compensation paid by the State of any sort or in any way for the suppression of these licences. I will not linger over the monstrosity, but, speaking as a banker, for I am not a brewer, I do feel this matter to the very core of my heart, the injustice of it strikes me so forcibly. Thus then, the compensation is to be provided by the trade, but even so you do not allow it to be generous compensation; you have cut it down to the lowest possible limit. You are only allowing fourteen years for the suppression of 30,000 licences, and you have to make the compensation go as far as you can, and there is not sufficient of it. Instead of providing for the compensation which has been held proper in the Ashby Brewery case, against which the Inland Revenue authorities, with the Chancellor of the Exchequer behind them, did not appeal, and of which the Lord Chief Justice, by way of *obiter dictum*, the other day approved, your basis of compensation is unfair and unsound. Now, let me take this further point which may not have occurred to some hon. Members who are not, I hope, for their own sakes, conversant with company matters. Think what chaos there is going to be during the fourteen years, because the Prime Minister said, when introducing the Bill, that it will be the duty of every prudent brewery company to set up an insurance fund, so as to provide against the termination of the time-limit. But in very many, in most, cases it will be a matter of absolute pecuniary impossibility for brewery companies—I am not talking of the inflated brewery company, but the fair, honest brewery company, founded upon fair and honest lines — in addition to excise duties, rates, rent and taxes, and compensation levies, to provide these new insurance funds. I have no reason to doubt the many skilled auditors whose opinions have been quoted on that subject, and if they are wrong there has been an opportunity of having their findings corrected. No doubt they are right, and the House must feel with me that they are right when they say it is a matter of impossibility to get round in fourteen years and establish, in lieu of the licences that are taken away, a sinking fund that will correspond to their value. But the matter does not end there, because all shareholders do not stand in the same position. There are different kinds of shareholders in the same company. What is going to happen when you try to set up an insurance fund? It will suit one class of shareholders and not another. The debenture-holder has security. He has the bricks and mortar for what they are worth. He would have had the licences as well, but you are going to take them away. He has the bricks and mortar, but that in all probability will not be sufficient to cover him, and therefore he will want the insurance fund to make up the deficiency. But the other shareholders will say to the debenture-holder: "Not quite so fast, my friend. Although an insurance fund may suit you, it may not suit us." The preference shareholder has no security, he only has his fixed interest, he is not in the comparatively happy position of the debenture-holder, and if the insurance fund does not reach him he will lose all his capital. He will want his interest and his capital, but he will probably try to balance the matter and say: "Shall I take my interest, or shall I forego my interest and depend on this fund for my capital?" The ordinary shareholder is in another position still. So long as the debenture-holder gets his interest and the preference shareholder his interest, they can do nothing, but the ordinary shareholder will say: "This insurance fund will not suit me, because it will never reach me. What I shall do is to get all the interest I can after the fixed interest is paid, and a fig for the insurance fund. I have to save my skin." That condition of things is certain to arise the moment you pass this Bill. All these questions must arise. Who is going to settle them? Mark me, you are going to have confusion worse confounded. And all this time the sword of Damocles is held over the head of the trade. Sir, it is bad enough for us to sit here, hour after hour, never knowing when we shall be fortunate, or in my own case, unfortunate enough to catch your eye. That takes all the life and gumption out of an ordinary man, but how about the life and gumption of the trade with this sword of execution suspended above its head all these fourteen years? The licensed houses will not be repaired. It will be to nobody's interest that they should be. It will be to the interest of the owners that they should be allowed to fall into disrepair, because they have to squeeze the orange to the greatest possible extent. The good men will be driven out of the trade, and the bad men will come in, and the last state will be worse than the first. Even brewers are mortal, and they have got to get out so far as they can. The character of the drink is going to suffer or prices are going to be raised. What is going to happen on the conclusion of the fourteen years (and here I hope the Government will be kind enough to enlighten me at some subsequent period of the debate, because I thought the Solicitor-General showed symptoms of weakening in this case)? What is going to happen when the 60,000 licences are handed in at the end of the fourteen years and the new heaven and the new earth are to begin? Is the State going to take the whole of the new licences and turn itself into a State publican? What will the temperance reformers say to that? I gather that that will not suit them; therefore, I suppose the State will not become a publican. Are the new licences, then, to be issued to the old holders as under the scheme put forward by Mr. Bruce in 1871? Mr. Bruce's scheme was a time-limit of ten years, during which period the trade could look round, and at the end of the time there was to be a series of fresh certificates issued to the old licence-holders. What are the Government going to do? Are the old licences going to have the first call, and if they are not I suppose they are to be put up to auction, issued at a rack rental. Will that conduce to temperance? This is a broad proposition which I wish to examine broadly. It is not a majestic spectacle, to my mind, to see the State haggling for the highest sum it can get, seeking to get the highest price from the highest bidder. But then the bidder having paid a high price for the licence has to get all he can from the liquor trade. Naturally, he will try to get it out of somebody. Is the drink traffic going to be put on a more satisfactory basis by an operation of that kind? Then another consideration arises. The State is counting on getting an immense sum of money annually out of the licences, but how about Clause 2? That is a prohibition clause. Suppose a licensing district says, and the power is given to it by Clause 2: "No, we will not have the drink trade at all." The Bill gives power to them to prohibit licences. Where, in that event, is the great revenue to come from for the State? There, it seems to me, the State is on the horns of a dilemma. You cannot have it both ways. If you have sobriety you will have an empty exchequer. [Cries of "No."] That observation does not seem to commend itself to the intelligence of hon. Gentlemen opposite, but what I mean to convey is that the broader the principle of prohibition extends so much the less money will the State get out of the rack rent of the licences. That must be patent to everybody. I do not believe the Government have any idea where they are getting to. If one could only penetrate into the inner recesses of the Prime Minister's mind, and see what his real feelings are about this Bill, I wonder what we should find. That he has been pushed into it I feel sure. I do not blame the temperance reformers, but the right hon. Gentleman has been pushed into this matter by them, and when the House of Lords rejects this measure, as it will do, then I wish I could be present at the meeting between the right hon. Gentleman and the foremost protagonists of the temperance movement. If I were, I expect I should hear the right hon. Gentleman say: "What did I tell you? You have only yourselves to blame." The Government have made a mistake, and they know it. They have not sufficiently considered the real trend of public opinion—not public-house opinion—but real public opinion. They have not been able to see the wood on account of the trees. Public opinion is not with them, even though this were a temperance measure. We know that in the temperance councils there is the spectre of the clubs with which they do not dare to cope. Even if it is a temperance measure the ocuntry want justice first, and they will not have a measure, the honour of which, if any, stands rooted in dishonour. You are confiscating great interests, and legitimate interests, in this country. The licensed trade has been supported and approved for generations by the State. This country is still an honest and adjust country; it does not like injustice. Apart altogether from party politics, Englishmen, the citizens of these Islands, like to see justice, and they like to see it in high places. They make and unmake them. They expect the Government not to drag the honour of the State through the mud, and you are dragging it through the mud. The Government have made a mistake, and all Governments have to pay the penalty for mistakes, for Governments are only like individuals. You have put your money on the wrong horse. You are tampering with great principles, and whenever the country has the opportunity of making its voice known in this matter, the Government and the Party behind it will find out that its fall will be just as certain, and just as dramatic as its rise.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. GLADSTONE, Leeds, W.): I congratulate my hon. friend upon the life which he has thrown into his speech, despite all the disadvantages from which he said he was suffering.

I observe the terror which he seems to express at the idea of a sober nation. If that terrible condition of things comes about, he gives us to understand that the Government of the country will be deprived of all sources of revenue. I am not going to attempt to make an exact quotation, but I will say this, that if the Chancellor of the Exchequer is faced with the spectacle of an altogether sober nation, he would not be so much hampered by expenditure, and he would not be at any disadvantage in collecting his revenue. One of the remarkable features of this debate has been its freedom from heat and from fiery language. I listened to my hon. friend, who entertains strong views which he put in a most good-tempered fashion. Yet this question in the country has given rise perhaps to fiercer passions and more formidable agitations than almost any other question of social reform. This debate, on the whole and from the first, has been quite dispassionate. Perhaps that is in no small measure due, if I may say so, to the admirable lead given us by the hon. and learned Member for Kingston in his most lucid speech, in which he practically stated the whole case for the Opposition. There was a brush between the right hon. Gentleman opposite, the Member for South Dublin, and my hon. friend the Member for Appleby, and I think the right hon. Gentleman was rather unnecessarily severe. My hon. friend belongs to a band of men who have given their lives to this cause of temperance.

MR. WALTER LONG (Dublin, S.): Hear, hear!

*MR. GLADSTONE: It is a cause which appeals to every man in the country, irrespective of party, though I agree we differ as to the methods by which we seek to attain our object. I myself have been in somewhat violent collision with my hon. friend behind me on some of these questions of licensing reform. But apart from political methods which are opposed by one section or another, I say it is only right to acknowledge the splendid social work of temperance organisations, which have done and will do more effective work for temperance than even the best Acts of Parliament.

MR. WALTER LONG was understood to say that both parties supported the cause of temperance.

*MR. GLADSTONE: I grant that there is no difference of opinion on that question; we are all anxious to see the country as prosperous and sober as it possibly can be made. What has been the nature of this attack? The Prime Minister said that the Government had two main objects to achieve. For the purpose of my argument I will expand those two objects into three. Take, first of all, the recovery of the monopoly value by the State; secondly, the reduction of licences under compensation, to a fixed proportion; and thirdly, other regulations which will be applied for the diminution of drunkenness and the promotion of temperance. Now the attack, which was in the main on the first two pillars of the Bill, was based principally on financial grounds. With the exception perhaps of the speech of my hon. friend who has just sat down, there has been no objection in principle either to the recovery of the monopoly value or to the reduction under a time-limit. I do not say more than that at present, but that is what I gather, at any rate up to the present time, from the speeches which have been made in this debate. I make no complaint at all of the character of the attack on the Bill for the reason that it has been largely on the financial question. I agree that if the Opposition or if any hon. Members on this side of the House believe that injustice is caused either to persons or to the rights of property by anything we propose, it is their right, and it is their duty, to criticise and, if necessary, to oppose. But the fact remains that the attack on this Bill up to the present is an attack on methods but not on the main objects which we have at heart. Now, my argument is that the criticisms of this Bill which we have had from hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite do not justify the Motion for the rejection, either taken by themselves or taken in conjunction with my third object—namely, that other part of the Bill which is calculated to alter the law or add to the law in the furtherance of the promotion, the direct promotion, of temperance. Now, I come to the monopoly value, and I think it best first of all to repeat the Prime Minister's definition of monopoly value. He said—

> "The monopoly value, measured not as rent, but measured as a lump sum, means the capitalised value of the difference between the licensed and unlicensed rental of the premises."

That is one way of defining it, but it is not necessary that the definition should be applied to a large lump sum. It can be defined by omitting certain words and saying: "The monopoly value is the difference between the licensed and unlicensed premises." We had two speeches delivered yesterday by hon. friends of mine on this side of the House, the Member for Coventry and the Member for Huntingdon, and both of my hon. friends seemed to be under great apprehension, or rather shared the apprehension expressed by Gentlemen opposite, as to the condition of things which would be brought about by this Bill. I think the calculations which my hon. friend for Coventry gave were based really on a misapprehension of the Bill. His calculations were made on the assumption that at the end of the statutory period the State is to absorb, as was suggested by my hon. friend, the whole of the profits of the trade, whether due to the protection against competition given by the licence or to the ordinary trading, the use of capital, and the application of individual labour and skill. That is not the case. It is not the intention of the Government, and it is not the purpose or effect of the Bill. I for my part agree with the suggestion thrown out by the Prime Minister that the insertion of a definition in the Bill will make matters clearer than perhaps they are at present. What will happen at the end of the period? I suppose at the end of the period we may assume that human intelligence will be much as it is now; that the ordinary methods of men in their private and public capacity, their sense of justice, of equity as to what is due to an individual or a company will be much the same in fourteen years time as they are at present. What will happen? At the present time, by the Act of 1904, the justices have to get at the monopoly value, under Section 4, in the case of new licences. How do they proceed? I will give a rough description; I cannot give more, because I am not supplied with the actual details of decisions and judgments, but I can give a rough description of what has happened in getting at the monopoly value. Frequently, no doubt, the monopoly value is arrived at in a more or less rough and ready manner. The applicant says what he is prepared to take. The justices try to screw him up, and finally they agree. If the thing is based on either side on anything like precise calculations they are no doubt on the following lines. The house in question is a house capable of entering on or being adapted to either the purposes of the licensed liquor trade or some other trade that does not require a licence. What would be the ordinary profit on the unlicensed trade? Say 6 per cent. What would be the profit on the licensed trade? That would have to be estimated in the first year and ascertained from the books in succeeding years. Say it was 15 or 20 per cent. Take the difference between the two, allow something for good management and other considerations as provided in Section 4 of the Act of 1904, and the result is the monopoly value, which may be either capitalised in a lump sum and paid as in some cases already, or it may be in the form of an annual payment as provided in Clause 24 of the Bill. That is, roughly, the procedure, and what is passing under the Act of 1904 is possible under the Bill which we are now considering. The statutory period will enable, at any rate, provision to be made for that loss, and the new licensee will be enabled to make a fair trading profit. There is no terrible spoliation in that. If the law is made clear I myself have sufficient confidence in public authorities to feel satisfied that they will administer it on principles of justice and common-sense. Now the State wishes to recover its full title, to control in its own interest the licensed liquor trade, unfettered by any claim founded on law and custom, and place itself once and for all in a free position to take such action as it pleases in the public interest, subject only to those equitable considerations which are essential in administrative action. Such considerations, I maintain, will weigh with the local justices and urban licensing authorities at the end of the period as they do now in the administration of the Act of 1904, and with an adequate statutory period there is no sufficient justification for the fears expressed. I pass to consider for a moment the reference by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Dublin yesterday to the question of the time-limit. He said the time-limit was in his opinion absolutely incompatible with the concurrent levy for insurance, and that was a considered statement which represented the view of himself and his colleagues. He said that was their opinion in 1904 and was their opinion now. I gladly recognise the qualification in what the right hon. Gentleman said. I do not ask for any further explanation. I place my own inference upon it and do not ask him whether I am right or wrong. The inference I draw is that the right hon. Gentleman and his colleagues do not object in principle to the time-limit. That being so, I say no more at present on this very important point, except that the issue appears to me to be narrowed down to a question of terms, and that view is strengthened by a passage which I will quote from the speech of the hon. and learned Gentleman who moved the Amendment—

> "The time-limit in the sense in which the Bill imposed it he did not accept, whatever the period might be. A genuine proposal under which, after a certain time, the absolute freedom of the justices would be restored, he would gladly consider."

For my part I am not dissatisfied with those considered statements which have been made by the hon. and learned Gentleman and by the right hon. Gentleman opposite. I leave that point; it will be dealt with frequently by subsequent speakers, and at subsequent stages of the Bill, and I pass to my second point, which has regard to the reduction proposed under the Bill. I do not enter into the question now as to the precise degree to which the reduction of public-houses may reduce intemperance, but I note that it has been generally admitted that in fact a reduction of public-houses does contribute to sobriety, and so I argue it does in fact tend to diminish drunkenness. But I pass to other points. First of all with regard to the basis of compensation, I understand that the Opposition accept the Kennedy judgment and defend it—they roost in the Kennedy judgment. The interesting point is at what precise moment they made up their minds that the result achieved by the Kennedy judgment was a right one for assessing the value. When they drafted the Bill of 1904, was it their intention to base their compensation proposals on what we now know as the Kennedy judgment? The matter was described by my predecessor in introducing the Licensing Bill in 1904. He said—

> "The next point we have to consider is the amount of compensation to be awarded to the licensee, and we have decided that the fair measure of compensation which ought to be afforded is the difference between the value of the licensed premises and the value of the premises without a licence. Of course, that would be calculated as if the Act had not been passed. This, again, is one of the recommendations made by the majority of the Royal Commission."

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS (Kent, St. Augustine's): Read on, because it makes a good deal of difference.

*MR. GLADSTONE: I will read on, but it is unnecessary to my argument. My point is that it seems to me that even if you add on the further words of the right hon. Gentleman it does not foreshadow in any way the principles and the intended effect which are embodied in the Kennedy judgment. Of course, the question of barrelage profits and things of that sort, so far as I know, never came under the consideration at all of the Royal Commission, and there is nothing in the Report of the majority of the Royal Commission to show that they took any cognisance of the principles which Mr. Justice Kennedy laid down in his famous judgment.

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS: I asked the right hon. Gentleman to read on, simply for this reason, that if he had done so he would have seen I said—

> "Should the sum awarded by quarter sessions be incapable of being settled on that basis, the amount will be fixed by the Inland Revenue Commissioners in the same manner as they would fix the value for estate duty."

*MR. GLADSTONE: That is quite true, but the substantive basis which the

Government had in their mind was that it should be the difference between the value of the licensed premises and the value of the premises without a licence, and then they left it to the Inland Revenue. Yesterday in an interruption, the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Dublin University explained the position further by saying it was the intention of the late Government to make the market value the basis. But that is not the Kennedy judgment. I have read the Kennedy judgment as carefully as I can, and I have consulted all the information at my disposal, but I cannot make out that the market value is in fact the basis of the Kennedy judgment. The market value is what the house would fetch in the open market when sold to a man who expected to make a living out of it. I think that is a fair definition. Mr. Justice Kennedy gave the capitalised value of all the profits. Perhaps the late Chancellor will throw light on this point, because the hon. and learned Gentleman who moved the Amendment, as I understood him, denied that the judgment did include these profits. I cannot understand how it failed to include them. Why is the barrelage profit not a profit? That is the thing that puzzles me when trying to explain the language of hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite. I am quite aware that Mr. Justice Kennedy excluded the special profit accruing from the application of special skill and knowledge of a particular brewer, but does the right hon. Gentleman opposite say that Mr. Justice Kennedy in his judgment excluded the ordinary profits of the brewer? I maintain that he included them. Therefore the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Kingston was wrong. You cannot have it both ways, and perhaps when the right hon. Member for Dublin University speaks he will throw light on this point. So far as our information goes at present, we maintain that Mr. Justice Kennedy included all the brewer's ordinary profits and, as a matter of fact, the Member for South Hunts, representing a large and important brewery concern, in his speech yesterday admitted that the brewer's profits were included. I want to know, was it your intention to include them?

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I am quite ready for the right hon. Gentleman to cross-examine me, but I would remind him that he represents the Government who are legislating.

*MR. GLADSTONE: I quite agree, but then the contention of the Prime Minister is challenged as regards what he said about the basis of our proposal as to assessment. That statement is challenged by hon. Members opposite. I want to show that their basis in the Act of 1904, if not exactly the same, is not dissimilar from the basis proposed in the present Bill. The Kennedy judgment was given at the end of July, and consequently at that time the Act of 1904 had been in operation about a year and a half, and between 400 and 500 cases had been settled upon the basis on which the Board of Inland Revenue worked. Is it alleged that brewers did not know what market values were? In the past they have accepted these awards as representing the market value, and for a year and a half they did not appeal. So far as I am aware these awards caused no uneasiness to the late Government, and I am not aware that our predecessors in office consulted the law officers of the Crown as to whether the Board of Inland Revenue were right, or announced their intention of bringing in an amending Bill. The late Government remained silent, and these awards were accepted by the brewers. After the Kennedy judgment a number of the claims previously sent in were withdrawn because those who put them forward saw a chance of getting more money. As a matter of fact, taking houses of exactly the same class, after the Kennedy judgment awards were given which in some cases were no less than three times as much as the awards given before that judgment. I want to know from hon. Gentlemen opposite exactly what was the system they intended, because there is a very great difference between the awards made before and after the Kennedy judgment, and they cannot both be right. At any rate the late Government appeared to acquiesce in the principles laid down by the Board of Inland Revenue. I may safely say that if the Board of Inland

Revenue had started their assessment upon the basis of the Kennedy judgment nobody would have been more surprised than the late Government. There are one or two other points upon which I should like to say a few words. Hon. Members opposite say that this reduction will create unemployment. Not a single individual who represents labour in any direct sense or form has up to the present made this point against the Bill. The Labour representatives are not backward on the question of unemployment, and yet not one of them has made the charge as to unemployment put forward by hon. Members opposite. It has been said that 2,000,000 people in the country are employed in the licensed trade or in the trades necessary to the carrying on of the licensed trade. What does that mean? It means according to that statement that these people, with their families, would amount to one-fifth of the entire population. So throughout the population one person in five would be engaged in supplying liquor to the other four. I do not say that right hon. Gentlemen opposite are responsible for that statement, but it has been seriously made outside. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Dublin says that this Bill will create unemployment. I should like to know what provision he made on this point in his own Bill of 1904? You now say that this Bill will lead to unemployment and that our reduction of licences scheme will throw people out of employment.

MR. WALTER LONG: I admit that the statement as to unemployment has been exaggerated, but there is also to be considered the general injury which will be done to those who derive their living from trade investments.

*MR. GLADSTONE: I do not agree that this Bill will bring ruin to the shareholders. I am now dealing with the allegation that the suppression of licences will throw out of employment many thousands of people. If that is the danger, what precaution did the late Government take against such a danger in connection with their Bill? Hon. Gentlemen opposite glory in the fact that their Bill has led to the suppression in a single year of as many as 2,000 licences. Let me assume for the sake of argument their figure that five people are employed in a house. This means that the loss, say, of 1,500 licences will throw 7,500 people out of employment. I do not blame the late Government for not taking any precautions in regard to this matter, but I cannot allow the supporters of the Act of 1904 to bring this particular charge against us. I agree that when licences are suppressed, necessarily distress may be caused to some individuals, but we have to consider the broad economic effect of the diminution of public-houses. That is the main issue. In the first place you get rid of what we maintain are redundant houses. If redundant they are uneconomic, a waste causing loss, and occupying labour which might be more profitably employed in other directions. By getting rid of the worst public-houses you give fuller opportunities to the police of supervising those that remain, and according to the law of the survival of the fittest the standard of public-houses which remain must be improved. The suppression of public-houses must increase the rateable value of the districts where they are suppressed. It is well known that the existence of inferior public-houses diminishes the value of property in their immediate neighbourhood, and, therefore, their suppression must increase the rateable value of the property around. Lastly, I contend that the suppression of licences will diminish crime. In the case of the worse crimes of violence nothing is more remarkable than the fact that not only the criminal himself but a large number of those with whom he associates go from one low public-house to another before they are worked up to acts of violence. Therefore, for all these reasons, a reduction of these houses must be beneficial, and the argument as regards unemployment is met by the broad general improvement which must be effected by the diminution of redundant public-houses. I now pass to the clause dealing with schemes. We have endeavoured to provide elasticity in the first schedule of the Bill. Let it be remembered, in the first instance, that we restore to the justices the discretion which was removed from them under the Act of 1904, and these schemes will give them large scope for substantial and active work. They will be matters of great local interest to them. It has been alleged that these schemes will be made to undergo drastic revision by three Commissioners sitting in London. That is not so at all. I must, therefore, pass on to explain to the House why we thought it necessary to establish under the Bill a Commission consisting of three gentlemen. Of course, the primary object of the Commission is financial. The compensation fund, having been centralised, must be under the supervision of some authority. It is undesirable to saddle the Treasury with that work. There are strong objections to making some Government Department, say the Home Office, responsible for it. We thought it should be an independent or semi-independent authority, which could be trusted by the people of the country, and we, therefore, propose to establish this Commission in order to administer the fund, and to see that a proper proportionate distribution of it is made to the various licensing authorities under the schemes. That will be the central object and purpose of the Commission, but when once you establish a Commission you find that it may very usefully discharge other duties, and so it is in this case. It is desirable to establish reasonable co-ordination of the schemes. Questions might arise by variations in the schemes of contiguous licensing authorities. Let me take an example—the hotels and inns on the banks of the Thames. Between Oxford and London there are no less than twenty-nine different authorities. We contemplate that in such places as these on the banks of the Thames, familiar to many of us, it will be necessary to make free use of the exceptional treatment provided for by the Bill. They are places of pleasure resort, and the inns and hotels which have practically no business during the winter are necessary for the public during the summer months, and, therefore, special treatment is necessary for them. These different authorities sometimes face each other, and sometimes are contiguous to each other, and it is absolutely necessary that there should be some reasonable homogeneity between the schemes of the authorities who are responsible for the licensing areas bordering on the River Thames. The same consideration that applies very strongly to the Thames applies to the licensing areas all over the country. It is obvious that proposals with respect to the boundaries of a particular area ought to have some regard to the proposals for the contiguous area. It will not be possible on all occasions for two areas to come to a definite agreement, but I maintain that the licensing justices will welcome the establishment of this Commission which will help them to co-ordinate their schemes. I hope I have explained why the Commission is necessary. I wish to impress upon hon. Gentlemen opposite that that Commission is not established for the purpose of drastically reviewing all the schemes made by the local authorities. It is really with a view of making their schemes not only adequate, but in harmony with the schemes made for adjoining areas, and certainly it is our object and intention that the Commission should not be set up to sit in judgment on the local justices, but that it should work to help them to carry out the duties imposed upon them by the Bill. I have finished what I have to say in regard to these two main points in the Bill. Having regard to the expressed willingness of the Government to consider reasonable Amendments, I do not think that the criticism which has been made on these main pillars of the Bill really justify the unqualified opposition pronounced by hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite. I now pass to a brief review of the third and fourth parts of the Bill, which deal with miscellaneous subjects and clubs. It has been frequently said that this Bill will do nothing for temperance. It has been already admitted that the reduction of licences made under the operation of the 1904 Act tends to diminish drunkenness. A portion of this Bill will be calculated to promote the cause of temperance. From the speeches of hon. Gentlemen one would think that there is nothing in the Bill at all, except some provisions with regard to the reduction of licences and the extinction of the monopoly value, but the more substantive and direct provisions of the Bill are hardly ever mentioned in the speeches of hon. Gentlemen opposite. I shall deal with one question first of all, which is not in that category, because it has been mentioned. It is the question of clubs. I agree that the question of clubs is a very serious problem, and it is not to be dealt with in the humorous but swashbuckling and ineffective style of the hon. and learned Member for the Walton Division of Liverpool. Clubs are combined into a very powerful organisation with which any Government has to reckon. The Government of 1902 had to reckon with it, and perhaps they reckoned with it far too much, because, although the provisions in the 1902 Act as they stand are excellent provisions which have had some good effect, they have not had sufficient effect. My hon. friend the Member for Coventry seriously criticised the proposals in the Bill now before the House. So far as I am concerned I am well aware of the position of this question. In my own constituency there are something like 100,000 people, and there are numbers of clubs largely composed of working men. I am a member myself of many of them. I have been in them times without number during the last twenty-eight years, and I am quite familiar with their nature. In some of them there are, no doubt, Sunday entertainments. In considering that matter let the House remember what is the life of a working man during six days of the week. During these days he works, perhaps, long monotonous hours. He is expected to go to church on Sunday, and then to go home, or to take a walk in the park. That is a good ideal, but we know perfectly well that it is not practicable in this world. You know that these working men will take advantage of any reasonable recreations on Sunday that are open to them. These matters suggest more serious social problems—the hours and conditions of labour, housing problems, and so forth—and, so long as these questions are not settled, how can you blame the men, or their wives and children, when they go to these clubs and enjoy the entertainments which have been alluded to by the hon. and learned Member for the Walton Division? But what these entertainments have to do with the objects and purposes of this Bill, I have not yet discovered, and it seems to me that the occupations and the recreations of the members of these clubs which have been alluded to on Sunday morning and Sunday afternoon or evening are about as relevant to the discussion of this Bill as might be the Sabbatical habits of the hon. and learned Member for the Walton Division himself. I do not see what his habits have to do with the Bill, and I do not see what the habits on Sunday morning or evening of members of these clubs have to do with it. We can wish that the recreations should be of a higher order, but let us remember the enormous improvement which has taken place in the recreation and habits, certainly of the working classes, in the course of the last twenty or thirty years, and there is no reason to think that as improvement continues the character of these recreations will not be improved. There is, I am well aware, undue drinking in some of these clubs, but there is undue drinking in private houses and in rich men's clubs, though I personally do not believe from my own experience—I may be prejudiced in my judgment of the character of the clubs with which I am familiar—that there is undue drinking as a general rule. In regard to these London clubs to which attention has been drawn, I asked for special police reports as to whether the members of these clubs have, in fact, so behaved or misbehaved as to cause trouble and disturbance in the neighbourhood, or to people who live in adjoining houses, and in every case in which the police reported to me they said that they had had no trouble with any of these clubs, and that they had received no complaint with regard to them. These are the clubs which have been held up to scorn and derision in the humorous speech of the hon. and learned Member for the Walton Division. I pass from that to the question of clubs in relation to the proposals made in this Bill. I can assure hon. Gentlemen opposite that the Government are not dependent upon them for Amendments to put this part of the Bill into the best possible shape. We shall ourselves be quite competent to strengthen our proposals, particularly with regard to new clubs. Here, again, it does not lie in the mouths of hon. Members opposite who are responsible for the Act of 1904 to attack us for not making more effective provision with regard to clubs. You say that this is a new trouble, but it is a trouble which was apparent under your own Act. The number of clubs has considerably increased of late years. We are told that it has increased *pari passu* with the extinction of licences under the Act of 1904, yet you made no provision for that.

MR. YOUNGER (Ayr Burghs): Since the Act of 1904?

*MR. GLADSTONE: Certainly. There were thousands of clubs in existence—4,000 or 5,000—in 1904; and if there is any difficulty at all it was known in 1904. It, therefore, does not lie in the mouths of hon. Gentlemen opposite to make any serious charge against us in this matter, having regard to the fact that they did not make any provision for the further restriction of clubs nor provide that extinguished public-houses should not blossom out subsequently as drinking clubs. We are going to make some provision to deal with clubs, and we intend to make it effective. I desire now to call attention to various excellent clauses in the Bill which seem to have escaped the attention of hon. Gentlemen opposite. Clause 18 restricts the hours of opening on Sundays and extends the Sunday closing to Monmouth, and alters the *status* of our old friend the *bona fide* traveller. If hon. Members refer to the Majority Report of the Peel Commission they will find that this provision is there recommended. Clause 19 deals with the exclusion of children from the bars of licensed premises, and that clause got the most emphatic praise from the hon. and learned Member who moved the rejection of the Bill. Then Clauses 28 and 29 increase the powers of the licensing justices for taking legal action and defending their decisions. Clause 32 proposes to suppress the growing practice due to a recent judicial decision of frequenting public-houses for the purposes of betting. In Schedule 6 we deal with the question of consolidation. One result of the passing of the measure will be to amend the whole of this complicated Licensing Law and to embody in one Statute the provisions of something like 128 Acts. Then there is the question of "off"-licences. We propose by Clause 21 that all retailers of liquor should require a justices' licence. At the present time off-licences are often established in opposition to the wishes of the justices. Clause 2 applies local option to the grant of new off-licences, and Clause 5 extends the provision in the Act of 1904, in regard to new on-licences to new off-licences. Then the subject of passenger boats dealt with in Clause 34 and Schedule V. is a most important matter. I cannot help thinking that I have the sympathy of my hon. friends opposite in regard to it, because the licensing trade itself has made a protest in regard to it. During the summer months hundreds of thousands of people get aboard river or coasting steamers which become literally floating public-houses under no restriction whatever. They merely have to get an excise licence to enable them to supply liquor to anybody they like during any hours, irrespective of whether the passengers have already had too much to drink. The condition of those steamers on the Thames, the Severn, the Mersey, the Tyne, and of many coastal steamers, is a public scandal and causes an untold nuisance to quiet people who are interfered with or annoyed by drunken people who land in quiet neighbourhoods. This is a difficult matter to deal with, but we attempt to deal with it practically in this Bill as a real social evil. Clause 20 which gives powers to the justices to attach conditions to the renewal of licences we believe to be one of the most valuable clauses in the Bill, and that it will make largely for temperance. Now I thank the house for the patience with which they have listened to me. I am no good at perorations and I will only say that I believe honestly and whole-heartedly that if the financial clauses are unfair and unsatisfactory they can be adjusted to meet legitimate claims and rights, and that on the temperance side the Bill will remove many great evils and greatly strengthen, directly and indirectly, the forces which exist for the removal of a great stumbling block in the way of national prosperity.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN (Worcestershire, E.): I do not propose to follow the right hon. Gentleman into the discussion of the details of the measure with which his speech concluded. Indeed I rather regret that he himself should have devoted so much of his time to matters which I think are essentially matters for Committee, rather than to answering the great questions of principle—those large features of the Bill which have formed the subject of criticism from this side of the House. The Prime Minister opened this debate by saying that he was still waiting for some reasoned answer to the main propositions he had advanced. Well, we are now on the third day of the debate and the position is reversed. It is we who are now waiting, and so far waiting in vain, for any attempt to meet the position which my hon. friends on these benches have assumed. They have not dealt in loose assertions, and, following the admirable example set by my hon. and learned friend who moved the Amendment, the speeches which have come from these benches, as was recognised by the right hon. Gentleman in the tribute which he paid to the spirit of the debate throughout the House, have been reasoned and argumentative. They have been illustrated by facts not one of which has been challenged although there have been two days for their examination, and although the Government have all the resources of the public offices at their command. The arguments based upon them have been not only not upset, but not even met. Three Members of the Government have spoken since my hon. and learned friend moved his Amendment, yet the case he made is absolutely unshaken by anything said by any Member of the Government. We all looked forward with special interest to the speech of the right hon. Gentleman because of the office he holds, but he has done nothing to sustain the case of the Government against the attack on the Bill. The time we have spent in debate has, however, not been altogether wasted, for it has defined and differentiated our respective positions. The difference between us is not in our desire to put down drunkenness or to promote temperance. There is, nevertheless, a difference between many Members opposite and my friends on this side and myself. The enemy of these hon. Gentlemen opposite is not drunkenness, but any form of the traffic in alcoholic drink. These hon. Members are not only anxious to suppress excess but to stop any drinking at all. [MINISTERIAL cries of "No."] What is the good of hon. Members contradicting me when I see sitting beside them other hon. Members whose object is not merely to put down drunkenness, but to put down all indulgence in drinking, and who are proud to boast that these are their principles? But that is not the line taken by the Government. With the object expressed by the Government, which is to prevent immoderate drinking, as the right hon. Gentleman recognises, we are heartily in sympathy. In all quarters of the House can there be anything but disgust and loathing at the evil of excessive drinking and the excesses and bad effects to which it leads? But as regards the spread of temperance the difference between us is as to the methods employed and their justice. As to their efficiency I propose to say something later, but for the moment I am ready to assume for the purposes of my argument that the Bill would have all the results in promoting temperance which its most sanguine advocates expect, and I still assert that even if that were so, I should oppose this Bill because it is rooted in injustice and because you have not a right to purchase a great public benefit at the expense of a particular private individual. You call this a great moral reform, but let us be moral at our own expense. If you believe the thing is worth doing, if you believe that a great and sudden reduction of licenses will produce a great temperance effect, have the courage of your convictions and ask the country to vote the sum necessary to make that great and sudden reduction, but do not come here, and attend public meetings in the country, and arrogate to yourselves the exclusive possession of virtues when you are only prepared to practise them at other people's expense. I think I come to the root of the question which is at issue between ourselves and those who support the Government Bill, when I proceed to state the compensation which you are proposing to pay, and ask you what it is that you are taking away from the individual, and for which you ought to compensate him? I think there is a good deal of confusion in the minds of the Members of the Government as to what they are doing in this matter. The right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary spent some little part of the earlier portion of his speech in defining the monopoly value of which possession was to be resumed for the benefit of the public at the end of the fourteen years period, or which can be taken under our Act from any recipient of a new licence. Does not the right hon. Gentleman see and cannot the House see that what you have to give in the name of monopoly value when you grant a new licence is something quite different and very much less than you would take away from a man when you deprive him of an existing licence? I agree with the definition of monopoly value as given by the Home Secretary when you apply it to a new licence, but I say that what you take away from the holder of an existing licence when you turn him out is something very much in excess of that. You take away from him the whole of his goodwill, but if you give a man a new licence there is no goodwill; you rightly charge him with the monopoly value. But when you stop his trade, when you put an end to his business, you have not merely to compensate him for the monopoly value, you have to compensate him for what he loses, you have to make good to him the loss which in the interests of the public you inflict upon him. It is on that point that I come into sharp conflict with the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister asserted the other day that whatever the expectations involved in the possession of a licence might be they were not a form of property, and, in the second place, with equal emphasis, he asserted that the licensing authority had an absolute discretion as to renewal. I dispute both those propositions; I join issue directly with the Prime Minister about them, and although it may be bold or more than bold, rash, for a layman to dispute with a gentleman so learned in the law as the Prime Minister is, I do not undertake to interpret the law, but I read the judgments given in Court, and I say that they are such that any layman with common sense can try for himself to test these two statements of the Prime Minister. Let me take the statement that before our Bill the discretion of the magistrates was absolute. I do not know whether there is a particular legal meaning attached to "absolute discretion," but I say that in any sense in which we ought to use the word the magistrate's discretion was not absolute. If I have an absolute discretion to do something it means I may do it or not when I like, how I like, for any reasons I like, or without reason at all. That is not the position of the magistrates. The Lord Chancellor, in that famous case of Sharpe *v.* Wakefield, in laying down what the discretion of the magistrates was, said that discretion means—

> "That something is to be done according to the rules of reason and justice, not according to private opinion; according to law, not humour."

Again he went on to say—

> "The Legislature has given credit to the magistrate for exercising a judicial discretion."

—not an absolute discretion—

> "That they will fairly decide the questions submitted to them and not by evasion attempt to repeal the law which permits public-houses to exist."

Lord Bramwell, in his judgment, said—

> "The Legislature had most clearly shown that it supposed, contemplated, that licences would usually be renewed; that the taking away a man's livelihood would not be practised cruelly or wantonly."

I say, Sir, then there was no absolute discretion, the discretion is carefully guarded and limited as declared in the judgment of these Judges. Therefore the judgments upon which hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite rely would absolutely refute any such general principle as is contemplated by this Bill. Then I come to the right hon. Gentleman's other contention. He says that there is no property in a licence. I say that there is property; I say that there is property which has been guarded and protected by the decisions of the Courts again and again—property which finds not the faintest recognition in the Bill which we are now discussing. The contention of the Prime Minister was that no legal wrong would be done if you took away all these licences at the end of a single year or at the end of any year. How can he contend that putting aside equity, putting aside common justice and fair play—how can he contend that in the face of [the repeated decisions of the Court as between public authorities and the holders of licensed premises and those interested in them, or as between citizen and citizen, where no public authority was concerned at all? I have half a dozen cases, but I will not weary the House by citing them all, as to many, especially to legal Members of the House, they will be familiar. But I will cite two. I take first the case of Belton *v.* the London County Council, and both of these cases have been decided since the case of Sharpe *v.* Wakefield. In Belton *v.* the London County Council the owner of a public-house let for an unexpired period of twenty-six years, claimed and received compensation from the County Council who desired to take possession of his premises for some public improvement. The County Council contended that there was no reversionary interest in the licence belonging to the owner who could only come into possession twenty-six years later. The Divisional Court declared that the owner of that reversionary interest was entitled to compensation and the Judge observed that—

> "The Council's proposition seems to me to involve a grievous injustice."

That injustice of the Council's proposition is the proposition of the Government, and that which the Judge condemned as grievous injustice is the foundation of the Government Bill. Another case I would cite was mentioned yesterday afternoon by the hon. Member for South Hants. It is the case of Lord Somer's trustees: "In *re* Earl Somers deceased—Cocks *v.* Lady Henry Somerset." In that case the defendant, a tenant for life of a certain property, sought to lease the White Hart, Reigate, with a covenant that the lessee should not sell intoxicating liquors. The trustees sought a declaration that she was not entitled to make any such stipulation and was bound to insert in all such leases provisions for the continuance of the renewal of the licence. Mr. Justice Chitty made this declaration—

> "Is not that recognition of property in a licence existing not merely for a moment, but in expectation of those who come after the tenant for life and which the tenant for life is bound to protect to the best of his or her ability for the benefit of successors."

I say in the face of these decisions it is idle to contend that there was not something more than an expectation and that there was not actual property which has been recognised again and again in the Courts and for which the Courts have ordered public authorities to pay whenever they have acquired it compulsorily and prevented private people from dealing with it to the detriment of their successors and those who have to come after them. I say that the discretion of the justices was not absolute and that there is in a licence a property for which you must compensate the owners.

THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. HERBERT SAMUEL, Yorkshire, Cleveland): Why did you not do that under the Act of 1904?

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: Why did not we do that under the Act of 1904? I must say that I have never heard anything more disingenuous in the course of this debate than the attempt of hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite to found their present measure upon the precedent of our Act of 1904. I do not think that those hon. Members who sat in the House in 1904 will think that that is fair.

*MR. GLADSTONE: I do not know whether the right hon. Gentleman refers to me. I have not done so, I said the compensation proposed by the Act of 1904 was not dissimilar.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: But the right hon. Gentleman's Under-Secretary undoubtedly did.

MR. HERBERT SAMUEL: If the right hon. Gentleman says that there is an absolute right of property in the licence why did his Act make the owners of that property compensate themselves instead of taking the compensation out of public funds?

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: That is not the argument which the hon. and right hon. Gentlemen were using in their speeches.

MR. HERBERT SAMUEL: I put that Question and it has never been answered.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I will answer it in a moment. What they have both sought to show is that the measure of compensation which they propose is the measure of compensation which we intended to give.

THE SOLICITOR-GENERAL (Sir SAMUEL EVANS, Glamorganshire, Mid.): Nobody ever said the compensation was the same.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: The Home Secretary has just said that it was not dissimilar. To please the Solicitor-General I will not say they are the same, but that they are not dissimilar as the Home Secretary said. The Home Secretary wished to cross-examine me as to the intentions of the late Government when they passed the Licensing Act of 1904. I should have thought those intentions were perfectly clear, but I will tell him that we intended to give to the man from whom you took the property the value of the property which we took from him, that is to say the market value of the property which we took from him. In order to do that we provided by Section 1 of the Act that the value of the licensed premises should be taken—that the sum to be paid should be a sum equal to the difference between the value of the licensed premises calculated as if the licence were subject to the same conditions of renewal as prevailed immediately before the passing of that Act, and the value which those premises would bear if they were not licensed premises. Then we went on to say in the next clause how that calculation was to be made, and it was provided that in case of any dispute between the parties and the licensing authority the amount to be paid should be determined by the Commissioners of Inland Revenue in like manner as the valuation of an estate for the purpose of estate duty.

*MR. GLADSTONE: The alternative has never been operative.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I do not understand——

*MR. GLADSTONE: I apologise for interrupting, but, as a matter of fact, the alternative of the appeal was not taken before the Kennedy judgment.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I do not understand what the right hon. Gentleman means, but I think he will see that his interruption is immaterial to my point. The hon. Gentleman asked what our intentions were. I say that the intentions of the Government then were that the property should be valued in the same way as it would be valued for estate duty—that is, on its market value. Then the right hon. Gentleman asks: Do we approve or reject the Kennedy judgment? Of course we accept the Kennedy judgment. The real effect of the Kennedy judgment is that you are to claim the market value of the house, and in ascertaining the market value you must take into account that among the possible purchasers are the brewers. You do not get the market value of a property if you exclude from the market all those most likely to pay the highest price. If you are selling a "Sir Joshua" at Christie's, and if you say men with an income of more than £5,000 a year must be excluded from the room, will you get the value of the "Sir Joshua"? If the brewers are willing to pay a higher price than the house is worth, then the price which they are willing to pay becomes the market value. Then the Under-Secretary asks me: Why, knowing this, did we levy compensation from the trade? My answer to that is twofold. In the first place we conferred a certain additional security on the holders of licences, and in respect of that additional security we might be entitled to levy some charge. My second reason is that we were proceeding by a gradual and moderate reduction of licences, especially directed to those places which were overcrowded. It is true to say in such cases that the licensed trade must recoup any other house, because all that was legitimate in the trade that was done in those taken away comes to those that remain; and under those circumstances it is a fair thing to impose on the trade this burden. In each case the fund is a local fund, and the charge is, therefore, placed directly upon those who are interested in the neighbouring houses, and in the profit, if any, that is drawn from the house suppressed. Now I say that our object was to give the market value, and that has been the result of the Kennedy judgment. What is going to be the result of this Bill ? I have two or three cases here—my hon. and learned friend who moved the Amendment quoted some, let me give one or two more. They are cases decided under our Act, with the estimated figure of the compensation they would receive on the basis adopted by this Bill. In the first case the compensation given was £2,020. If you take the scale adopted by the present Government, there would be no compensation at all.

SIR THOMAS WHITTAKER (Yorkshire, W.R., Spen Valley) : Why ?

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: Because in this case the assessment of the house would be as great without the licence as with it. [MINISTERIAL laughter.] Yes ; but what do you compensate for ? Supposing a linen draper is carrying on a business in a house, and you want to take the house for the purposes of a public improvement, the house is worth just as much without the linen draper as with him. He is compensated for loss of profits and for the goodwill. When I see how little the hon. Gentleman who has interrupted me has considered the problem with which he is dealing, I do not wonder at all that he supports the Government; but I hope, as he is a constant attendant here, although he might not come and stand with me in this, he will at least say that the claim which we are urging is a claim for honest compensation and fair treatment. Now I take the case of the "Burton Arms," Holborn, W.C. The compensation awarded to the owners in that case was £4,652 ; under this Bill in the first year they would have got £577 10s. Those are only two cases. That is the property of which you are depriving men without compensation—£2,000 in the first case and £4,000 in the second—and that you take away in the name of morality from particular individuals without any regard to the loss and suffering that you are going to create by so doing. The right hon. Gentleman deprecated hard words, but it is difficult to describe a transaction of that kind by a name which is not a little hard—this conveyance of property from its owner to somebody else, this "resuming," to use the Prime Minister's own word, by the State of a property which it never possessed. ["Oh!"] Did the State ever possess the goodwill of a man's business ? It is no answer to say that the licence is a privilege. It was a restriction, and it only became a privilege because of the comparative meagreness with which the State has allowed the licences to be given. That is the way the Government are treating property. Can they be surprised that there is a very considerable outcry when a responsible Government frame a Bill on these lines ? The Prime Minister, the other day, spoke scornfully of financiers and magnates. It is all very well to come down to this House and sneer at them when they will not swallow a Bill of this sort, but that is not the language he used when he dined with the bankers at the Mansion House in July last. I am sorry the Prime Minister is not present. He then said—

> "I speak for the moment as a Member of the Government, and I say that, believing as I do, and as I believe my colleagues without exception do, that in the maintenance of private property, and in the continued reliance upon individual initiative is the mainspring of financial and commercial success ; and regarding, as I also do, as necessary corollaries from these assumptions the maintenance of the sanctity of contract and the impossibility of expropriation, even for the best public purposes, without adequate compensation and adequate security, for every form either of public or private investment, I do not think anyone is justified in entertaining any real apprehension that those conditions of stability (on which has rested for so long the great fabric of credit in this city—the clearing-house of the whole world—the centre, still, of the trade of the world as long as it has been, and as I trust it will remain) are in any danger of being imperilled or undermined. I assert to you with the utmost confidence that not only will I not be, but so far as I know, not any one of my colleagues will be, parties to any form either of administration or of legislation which would threaten those essential foundations of our financial and commercial stability."

[MINISTERIAL cheers.] Yes, but you take away from one man without a penny of compensation £4,000, and from another £2,000, and so on throughout the country, and yet you say you are giving adequate security for every form of public and private investment. I do not know whether the Prime Minister had in his mind the framework of this Bill when he spoke at that time. I would fain hope he had not, but I venture to say I fail to reconcile the statement he made to the bankers and merchants when he dined with them, with the action he has now taken. Great attempts have been made by the other side, and by the Prime Minister, to cast discredit on the claim to compensation on the ground that the prices at which many of these properties were bought were inflated and exorbitant. Nobody denies that. I think the managers of brewery companies are sometimes a little hardly dealt with in this matter. They made a bad speculation, and they and their shareholders have to bear the loss. But they are not altogether to blame. It was not they in many cases who voluntarily sought the system of turning free houses into tied houses. The movement was very much due to insurance companies. But what has that to do with the case, except to raise prejudice? You say that the public-house is bought at an exorbitant price; but if that was not its market value they would not pay the price. All we ask is that you should pay the fair market price, as between a willing seller and the best purchaser that he can find at the moment that the transaction takes place. But that is not what you are giving him. You are not giving him one-tenth of that price. An hon. Member near me calls my attention once again to the action of the Secretary of State for War. I must refer to that once more. Whatever may have been in the mind of the Prime Minister when he made that statement in the City, the Secretary of State for War must have known of this Bill when he sold the "Coach and Horses" at Portsmouth. He knew what the position was, but the purchaser had no access to those facts. I venture to say that if a private transaction had been carried out under such circumstances as those, no Court would have upheld the sale. I venture to say that the least the Secretary of State ought to do on behalf of the good credit of the nation is to give an opportunity to the purchaser to rescind his contract.

MR. LEIF JONES (Westmoreland, Appleby): Does he want to rescind?

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I have had no communication with the purchaser, and I have no right to say. But I have a right to say as a Member of Parliament, and as a citizen of this country, that conduct of this kind, which would not be permitted as between man and man, appears to me to be unworthy and unbecoming of the Government of this country. The Under-Secretary, in considering what compensation ought to be paid, proposed that we should deduct from any claims that were made the full amount of the reserve funds which companies had accumulated. He said that certain companies had £10,000,000 invested in public-houses, but that they had formed a reserve fund of £2,000,000 which was also invested in public-houses, and in taking away their licences, he would only consider the £10,000,000 and not the £2,000,000. I never heard a more amazing statement from any responsible person. What are reserves? They are undivided profits which prudent people set aside to equalise good and bad years, or to meet any of the accidents or falling off in trade to which in the ordinary course they might be liable. To say, because they have been prudent men, and done what business men ought to do in forming a good reserve fund, that, therefore, you are entitled to treat the reserve fund as if it were a gift from the State, as against what you take from them, appears to me to be a most preposterous doctrine to lay down.

*MR. HERBERT SAMUEL: I cannot have made myself quite plain, for the right hon. Gentleman has misunderstood me. I did not say that the licences which represented the reserve fund were not to be compensated for exactly the same as other licences. Of course, those licences stand on the same footing. What I said was that if the brewery companies are called upon to put by a considerable sum of money to represent the monopoly values which they would lose to the State at the end of the time-limit, we must take into account the fact that they have already, like prudent and sensible business men, put by a considerable part of that sum needed, and therefore, the burden which will lie upon them will not be so great as it is sometimes represented to be.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: It seems to me that is very much like saying that provided your victim has put by a reserve fund you are entitled to rob him to the extent of that reserve fund. I find it difficult to describe, I will not say the Members of the Government, but the effect of the Bill as anything but simple robbery of the property of individuals. When I heard the speech of the Solicitor-General yesterday, and noticed the animus he displayed, the obvious political hostility which he cherished against the trade for which he is legislating, I began to see how he reconciled himself to apply to this trade terms which he would resent in regard to any others carrying on lawful occupations in this country. I want to say a word or two on the question of how far this Bill is a temperance measure. It is common ground that a reduction of redundant houses by those who know the local circumstances tends to stop illicit practices, including drunkenness. But that is totally different from the scheme of this Bill. The Prime Minister claims that for a scheme which was sporadic and unequal he has substituted one which is compulsory and uniform. But it is the very essence of justice and efficiency in this matter that the incidence of the scheme should be unequal, because the circumstances of the different localities are unequal. To take an arbitrary line and say that so many public-houses must go without regard to the character of the people or the character of the licensed premises is surely the most absurd proposal ever submitted to reasonable men. Take small villages. Very often you will find a village with two or three small public-houses. No doubt one big house might do the whole trade of the village. But let hon. Members remember that these village public-houses are the clubs of the people. Each house has its own particular *clientèle*, and they do not want other clubs to mix with them. Sometimes there are political differences and sometimes small social differences. One man prefers one club and another man prefers another, and they would feel out of place and uncomfortable if they were all put into the same public-house. What would be said if members of the Athenæum suddenly mixed with members of the Camberwell Radical Club, presided over by the Secretary to the Board of Admiralty, or *vice versa*, if the members of the Camberwell Radical Club went among the Bishops in the Athenæum? An old school friend of mine, though not a political ally, for he belongs to the Party opposite, sent me a paper the other day showing the effect of this Bill on several of the largest villages in Cambridgeshire. My hon. and learned friend has already pointed out that Cambridgeshire has very few convictions for drunkenness per 10,000 of her population. In the twelve largest villages of Cambridgeshire, I am informed that, if this Bill is carried out, 132 public-houses out of 187 will have to be closed, or something over 70 per cent. That is not going to put down drunkenness, because there is little or no drunkenness in those villages now. I venture to say that that is not the way to promote temperance. And there I join direct issue with the great mass of hon. Gentlemen opposite. It is never wise to legislate in advance of public opinion, and certainly you will fail to effect your object, for never is that more true than when you do so on matters which concern the life and conduct of individual citizens. The hon. Member for the Tradeston Division of Glasgow, in dealing with a part of this Bill which has received much too little attention, the local option proposal, quoted the example of America. What is the case in America? No doubt in many cases they have complete prohibition. I do not know whether the hon. Member has travelled in States where there is prohibition in force. I have been in three of them. In one of the States the barman was selling a great deal of liquor in the cellar. I expressed my surprise to him that he had selected so uncomfortable a position, and he told me that if he sold liquor upstairs the police would drop on him at once; so the trade was carried on in the cellar of the hotel.

Mr. LEIF JONES: Where was this?

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: At Newport, in the White Mountains. In the next State I had to sign a telegram form ordering the drink in New York. It was supplied at once, and the telegram was sent on by train. In the third State I went down to the station to meet a resident. It was a small township in the neighbourhood of Boston. He wanted some refreshment after his journey. I said: "You cannot have it; you have prohibition here." He said: "I guess we will get it." We walked into the hotel premises; the barman took a look at us, and walked straight into the bar and served us. I asked my friend what was the explanation of this. Here time after time they voted for prohibition, yet in a small town like that, where the inhabitants must know the things that were going on in the hotel which we had just left, we could be served with liquor. "Well," he said, "like the Irishmen, we are in favour of the law, but we are all agin its enforcement." I do not think that the administration in America is a very good example, because there is not the same attempt to enforce the law as there is here when we pass it. But I say that just as in America they find it impossible to enforce the law where circumstances are unfavourable, so should we find it impossible here. As the hon. Member for Walton said the other day, you are not only dealing with drunkenness, but the claim of the promoters of the Bill goes much further, and they shut up the houses in which drunkenness or misconduct is not alleged. Are you going to shut up clubs in which drunkenness or misconduct is not alleged? I venture to think that in this matter the House is on the wrong lines, and I think that the wrong lines are carried further in the Bill which is under discussion. You treat the trade as if it were an outcast trade. You habitually speak scornfully and uncharitably of the men who are engaged in carrying it on. You want to apply restriction in regard to those who may or may not serve within the houses. If that means anything, it means that the trade is not a fit one for honest men. You would prevent men from taking their wives and families with them when they go to the public-house. Are you really serving the cause of temperance when you do that? The Home Secretary spoke of clubs in his division, and boasted that the men brought their wives and families with them. That is new to me. I did not know that there were any clubs of that kind. [" Oh, plenty of them."]

MR. GLADSTONE: It is a common practice.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: The right hon. Gentleman says it is a common practice. I think it is an excellent practice, for a man is much less likely to get drunk if he has his wife and family with him, and in my opinion the greatest step that you could take in favour of moderate drinking, and in favour of temperance as distinguished from total abstinence, would be to make the public-house, not what you now seek to make it, but a club in the truest sense of the term, a social hall, where a man could sit with his wife and family and talk politics or business with his cronies, and play draughts, dominoes, or other games, all of which he may play now in a club, but which the licensing justices do their best to restrict in the case of public-houses. What you have got to do is to get rid of the drinking bar, and turn it into a beer hall, such as they have in Germany. The House will pardon me if I call attention to the brass-workers' deputation which went to Germany to investigate the case of the brass-workers there. It is well worthy of attention and consideration by everybody who cares about the cause of temperance. The deputation consisted of one of the manufacturers, Mr. Best, Mr. W. J. Davis, Secretary of the Brass Workers' Union, and of another gentleman, Mr. C. Perks, who is connected with the Birmingham Hospital Saturday Fund. They said—

> "In disposition the workman is social and fond of company; he takes his wife out with him to the beer-house as an unwritten law; he would be regarded as unusual if he did not do so; remarks would be made if he left her at home. Total abstainers rarely exist but the men are temperate in the midst of opportunity. They refrain because it unfits them for work. They do not assume virtue with regard to temperance but regard temperance or moderation as the best from a general point of view."

"Temperate in the midst of opportunity." I call the attention of the House to those words. Is not that a better ideal to strive for than to bolster up a man's good conduct by putting all temptation beyond his reach? I turn a page or two further—

> "The number of persons convicted of drunkenness in Birmingham was about thirty times greater than in Berlin in proportion to the respective numbers of its inhabitants. These statistics are what we should expect to find after our observations in the beer halls and the streets on bank holiday, and point to the conclusion that a greater number of licences with a fewer number of total abstainers does not tend to drunkenness."

> "We wish to call attention to this different adjustment of the liberty in the two countries as this is an important question. We should be very sorry to treat with disrespect the many agencies for the promotion of temperance and the great number of high-minded workers in the cause."

> "We have to consider that eight people out of nine above fifteen years of age are non-abstainers. In Berlin this section of the community is provided for—in Birmingham it is not. There a man is trusted to show up against excess; here he is not. We say drunkenness is the cause of ignorance; in Berlin they reverse it and say: 'ignorance or want of proper training in youth is the cause of drunkenness.' Here we allow our young people to grow up untrained and unskilled and offer them the pledge later on when they are down in the gutter; there compulsory training helps to keep them out of the gutter and the pledge is not relied on."

On the lines indicated by these men after studying what was passing in Berlin you find matter for much thought, matter which, rightly understood and studied, may guide us to a wise conclusion in dealing with this question at home. One further quotation I would like to make. It refers to the character of the crowds they saw on Easter Monday—

> "There was a distinct characteristic in these crowds which is absent in an English beerhouse company of people, which we ascribe first to the light wholesome beer."

—I am not at all sure there is not a good deal to be said for the suggestion which I have seen thrown out that just as we now use the taxes imposed on alcohol in order to limit their consumption you might favour the least injurious and most beneficial among them in the scale of that taxation. I do not commit myself to that. It is a big fiscal question as well as a big temperance question, but it is worth consideration.

> "Secondly, to the presence of wives and families; and, thirdly, to the training and discipline to which every German child and youth is subjected."

Will you lessen temperance, will you improve the character of the public-house by introducing the uncertainty which this Bill introduces into the trade by making every man who invests money or industry in the trade uncertain as to what to-morrow will produce? Will you make a house more respectable by banning the presence of all women from it? Will you make a man more decent by teaching him that when he goes to a public-house his wife and child must not see what he is doing? I hold for these reasons that whilst, as I have said, the reduction of redundant licences carefully chosen because they are redundant has a distinct temperance effect, this Bill, in so far as it goes beyond that, will have no temperance effect at all, but will lead to the transfer of drinking from open houses, publicly recognised, constantly inspected, carefully watched over and prosecuted for the slightest infringement of the law, to clubs over which, whatever the Amendments you introduce, you cannot exercise one fraction of that control. And in order to secure this change you are going to disturb a great trade, you are going to unsettle that great fabric of credit of which the Chancellor of the Exchequer spoke in the City. You are going to threaten the central foundations of our financial and commercial stability, to use his words, to set an example which is eagerly grasped by the hon. Gentlemen below the gangway and which, if you are successful in carrying your measure, they will apply before long to deprive you of your property as you are using it to deprive others of theirs.

*SIR THOMAS WHITTAKER: I find it a little difficult to gather from the speech of the right hon. Gentleman what really is his view as to the prevalence of public-houses. I thought at one time by his quotations from the German Report that he regarded it as an ideal to be temperate in the midst of temptation. He seemed rather to imply that he regarded a multitude of temptation as desirable.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: My words were "in the midst of opportunity."

*Sir THOMAS WHITTAKER: Very similar. The right hon. Gentleman seems to regard a multitude of opportunity as a desirable thing. But I find that hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite have found it necessary to discriminate a good deal in their denunciation of the reduction of facilities as a remedy, and now they begin to tell us that they agree with a reduction in redundant houses. That is what is going to be done. The Bill fixes a maximum and not a very low one. There are populous industrial districts about the country far below the maximum of this Bill. This is not a low maximum, and where will the reduction be made? It will be made where there is a redundance. The majority Report of the Royal Commission on the Licensing Laws said—

> "We regard a large suppression of licences as essential."

And they recommended a reduction in Scotland. In England there are 50 per cent. more licences in proportion to population than in Scotland. Scotland is in the position that England will be in in fourteen years if this Bill is carried out. If reduction is not a temperance reform, how is it that the Act of 1904 was claimed as a temperance measure? Why are they taxing the trade? Why are they throwing people out of employment if it was not a temperance measure? One authority whom the right hon. Gentleman will respect, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, in his evidence before the House of Lords Committee on Intemperance, said—

> "The enormous number of public-houses, which is clearly out of all proportion to anything like the legitimate wants of the people, must tend to increase temptation."

I quite agree that statistics are no evidence. They do not test the amount of drunkenness or the amount of drinking. There are other considerations. What is the use of comparing the London gin palace with half a dozen entrances with a little country inn on the roadside? The action of the police makes all the difference. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, before the same Committee, made use of this expression—

> "Just one turn of the screw will bring in ten times the number."

How can you have the same arrests for drunkenness in a scattered country district where the policeman has many miles to look after as in the towns where he has only a few streets? The policeman is not on the spot, and where there are a number of public-houses a drunken man could reel from the public-house to his home three doors away without being seen. That does not happen in London. You want to compare similar districts. Then a great deal depends on the opinion and policy of the bench. A bench that allows an exorbitant number of public-houses, a negligent bench that has neglected its duty in that respect, is just the bench that discourages the police from arrest for drunkenness. The one follows the other. Where you have an active vigilant bench that reduces the number, that is the bench which encourages the police. I quote the Majority Report again for that—

> "There may be most drunkenness where there are the fewest prosecutions and convictions."

And we know that is often the case. Good wholesome beer! The right hon. Gentleman is eighty years behind his time. If you go back to the beginning of last century, that was the teaching then. The agitation for facilities for obtaining good wholesome beer led to the Beer Act of 1830. And in three months after it came into operation there were 24,000 additional beer-houses. What did Sidney Smith say?—

> "The new Beer Bill has begun its operations. Everybody is drunk; those who are not singing are sprawling. The sovereign people are in a beastly state."

A Commission was appointed four years after this, and gave the strongest Report against that Act which has ever been given.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I do not in the least object to the hon. Member's speech until he says that that is my policy. That is not my policy, and it does not bear the slightest resemblance to it. I have not advocated any increase of licences. I have advocated a continued reduction.

*Sir THOMAS WHITTAKER: It seems to me that there they got the good wholesome beer and abundance of opportunity which the right hon. Gentleman appeared to favour and desire. In Scotland, Ireland, and Wales they have Sunday closing. The same things have been said with regard to that as were said in regard to this proposal. The same predictions were made and they have all been falsified, and Royal Commissions and Committees have reported that these statements and predictions were not correct and were not borne out. Since those Acts were placed on the Statute-book there has never been found a Member of this House from Ireland, Scotland, or Wales, who would move for their repeal. There is not to be found an elected representative of a local authority in Scotland, Ireland, or Wales, who would send a memorial to the House and ask for the repeal of those Acts. The people on the spot who know approve. Dudley has seven times the number of public-houses that West Ham has. Will it be said that there would be no more drunkenness in West Ham if you multiplied their public-houses seven times? A reduction is being made, but it is not being made where it is most required. It is not easy to compare statistics on this question I admit. Hon. Members will remember that when the Bill of 1904 was before the House we had a Blue-book giving the number of on-licences in every licensing district in England and Wales. By a comparison of these figures we should be able to ascertain the amount of the reduction which has been made. One difficulty is that these Government statistics are not always made up on the same lines, and I understand that there is some variation in them. One set of figures represent the number of certificates issued by the justices, and the other the number of licences issued by the Inland Revenue authorities. It is true that a certificate may be issued by the justices and the applicant may not get the licence, but those cases are very few indeed and do not affect the actual result. I have taken out statistics relating to the twelve counties where there are the most public-houses and most beer-houses in proportion to the population from 1904 to 1907, and I find that the Act of 1904 has operated only to the extent of one third of one per cent. per annum. In the twelve county boroughs that most needed the reduction, which have the highest proportion of houses, the reduction has been only at the rate of one per cent. per annum. Make whatever allowance you like for the difference between certificates got from the justices and the licences got from the Inland Revenue, the pace is very slow. It means that in those boroughs it would take eighty years at the same rate to bring them down to one per 800 of the population, and seventy years to bring them down to the position in which London now is. And nobody will suggest that it is difficult to get a glass of beer in London. Similarly in those counties it will take 165 years to get the licences down to one for 400 of the population. It will take them 165 years to get those twelve counties down to the position as to the number of houses in proportion to population already existing in Northumberland, Essex, Cornwall, Durham, Lancashire, Surrey, Yorkshire, and the West Riding of Yorkshire, excluding county boroughs. It will take the twelve worst counties in England 165 years to get down to the same level. [Opposition cries of "Oh, oh!"] I am quoting from Government statistics and those are the figures. It has been said that this Bill will promote clubs. I should be the last to say that drinking clubs are not an evil, and I think the system by which entertainments at clubs are thrown open to scores of people who are not members is a great abuse of the privilege given to clubs to distribute liquor. It was never intended that this should be done. In the London music-halls the policy of the County Council is to get rid of the drink from the entertainment. Licensing justices have also discouraged music and dancing licences in connection with public-houses. In the club you have the entertainment, the music, and the drinking. It is not desirable, and it is not fair to the licensed trade. I, personally, feel that the hours for the supply of liquor in clubs ought to be limited to those permitted for public-houses. The club could be open, but the bar should be closed. I think that we might make an appeal to the club members of Pall Mall and to members of working men's clubs to submit to a little personal inconvenience in the interests of the well-being of the community as a whole. It is not for hon. Members opposite to denounce clubs. Who is it supplies the clubs? The brewers encourage them, and in some cases finance them. Does a small number of public-houses mean an increase in clubs? From 1887 to 1897 the clubs increased at the rate of 186 a year, and from 1900 to 1904 at the rate of 340. Since then there has been a great reduction in the number of public-houses, and that has not brought about an increased growth of clubs. Middlesbrough, Bootle, and West Ham have only one-fifth as many licensed houses as Dudley, Yarmouth and Norwich, and yet they have no more clubs in proportion to the population. Again, in the ten county boroughs which have most public-houses in proportion to population there are more clubs in proportion to population than in the ten county boroughs with fewest public-houses in proportion to population. No, the number of public-houses is not the key to the problem of clubs, and the view which I strongly hold is that the way in which we shall have to meet much of the public-house difficulty and much of the club difficulty will be by providing counter attractions. The public will have to provide places where the people may assemble and enjoy their social intercourse on the same lines and for the same reasons as they supply public parks. But the Act of 1904 was brought in to reduce licences. Did it promote clubs? And again, there is not a line in the Act of 1904 about clubs. If it is wrong for this Government to reduce licences and not deal so efficiently with clubs as the Opposition would like, what about their own Act? [" Oh, oh."] There certainly is not a word in that Act about clubs, and those hon. Members opposite who say such a great deal about clubs now were dumb when their own Bill was under discussion.

MR. LYTTELTON: The hon. Member has got the advantage of our experience. [" Oh."]

*SIR THOMAS WHITTAKER: Yes, and the experience is that clubs were growing more rapidly before that Act than since. An hon. Member opposite says the Bill does not apply to Ireland. Did the 1904 Act apply to Ireland, and did that hon. Member complain then? We cannot do everything at once. I am a Member of a Party which has been frequently told to take one step at a time. The moment we do so the very men who have been giving us that advice attack and denounce us because we do not insist upon everything at once. These complaints against the Bill are made by two classes of people—those who are looking for any reasons to avoid voting for the Bill, and those who desire to kill it. It is always "not thus, not now." As to the question of the time-limit, there is no legal right to the renewal of an ordinary public-house licence beyond a year. It is an expectation, and nothing more. It has been repeatedly declared to be so, and the brewers themselves in their manifesto at the beginning of this year say that all they claim is an expectation, and not a right. The law is perfectly clear, and the whole object of an annual licence is not to review the conduct only, but to revise the whole position. It has been said that it must be a judicial decision. What can be more judicial than a decision that the licence is not required in the public interest and that it should cease? That is a good and judicial reason. We have had in the course of this debate a great many quotations, but I would just like to quote what Lord Halsbury said in 1897 in the Boulter case. He said—

> "You draw a distinction between the original granting of the licence and the renewal of the licence. One must clear one's mind and see what it is. It is a new licence for the new year. It is important to observe the accuracy of language. It is not a renewal of the licence, it is another licence for another year."

That unquestionably is the strict law. What did that celebrated advocate, Mr. George Candy, say, who was known as the Attorney-General for brewerydom, and who appeared in nearly all their leading cases? Mr. Candy, in an interview in the *Globe*, immediately after the Sharpe *v.* Wakefield case, said—

> "The occupation of the most respectable publican has now been made one of the most precarious on the face of the earth; his licence can be taken away and his capital be confiscated

on grounds over which he has not the slightest control. The question of compensation cannot arise. Compensation implies a solatium for a wrong done; but here the highest tribunal in the land has decided that no wrong is done when a publican's licence is withheld."

That is the strict law. The right hon. Gentleman says that public authorities who take licensed premises have to pay compensation and that private individuals under similar circumstances have also to pay compensation. Just so; but the law does not give to the private individual the right to refuse to renew a licence, and let the hon. Member produce a case where compensation has had to be paid on behalf of the public when the licensing authority have refused to renew. But why, if this licence is the property of the publican, should he pay the compensation himself? We are told that under the Act of 1904 the compensation levy is a local fund and the local publican gets the benefit of the local reduction; but that will not do. It is a county fund, the money being collected all over the county, and in many a village and many a town there is payment made and no reduction of the licences—therefore, no local benefit. We have had a dissertation on the maintenance of contract. What is the contract for a licence? It is for one year "and no longer." It has been stated that licence renewal is customary. Just so. So is the renewal of the tenancy of an ordinary dwelling-house. Renewal is customary and you have no annual reminder. The tenant of an ordinary house has not to go to the landlord and apply for a renewal every year. The publican is reminded every year that he has to go to Brewster Sessions. It is only an expectation. An expectation means that it is a probability or a possibility, but it involves uncertainty and is nothing more than an expectation. The expectation in this case has a market value, but no expectation having a market value can as a matter of right deprive someone else of his rights, who in this case is the grantor. We all admit that the situation is a difficult one. We claim that all the legal right is absolutely on the one side, but we recognise that money has been invested, and we say that in the interest of the public well-being the nation must have full control over its own licences. There cannot be full control over them so long as someone else is recognised as having a financial interest in them beyond the time for which they are granted. It was this financial value which gave all the trouble before the introduction of the Act of 1904, and that Act was brought in because of the trouble as to the value. It must be but a temporary arrangement. We contend that it is unjust to the rest of the community to give this valuable privilege to a limited number of men unless they pay the full value for it. It is suggested that we should give fourteen years notice that at the end of that time we will charge the proper value. We are asked on what actuarial basis it is proposed to fix that period. It is not an actuarial question. What it means is this. A fourteen years run is equivalent to ten and a half years purchase. Take the two cases decided by Mr. Justice Kennedy. He gave ten years in one and eleven years in the other, and ten and a half is the average of the two. What will happen, it is asked, at the end of that time? We will start afresh, and charge a proper fee for the licence. It does not mean that we are going to close all the houses. It is not going to abolish drinking, brewing will not come to an end, but the nation will resume its dominion over licences, and the real issue raised by this Bill involves a struggle for mastery between the trade and the State. What does the financial arrangement involve to the owner of the houses? It involves that at the end of that time they must write off the monopoly value. There has been a good deal said about the monopoly value. My idea is that it is the additional value, the special value, which a licence gives to a property beyond what it would have if used for any other business. In the case of bakers, drapers, and others they make a profit, and if a man does a good business he makes a good profit. But if anyone could get a liquor licence for his shop, it would give him an immediate profit beyond what he could make in his ordinary business, and it is that additional value that the State ought to have. What is paid for should be the reasonable, normal, present value. The right hon. Gentleman opposite, the late Chancellor of the Exchequer, agreed that we could not be expected to pay exorbitantly inflated values. The amount should not necessarily be what a licence cost. The hon. Member for Kingston cited twenty-one houses which cost £550,000, but they may not be worth half that sum to-day. It is not the value twelve years ago that we have to deal with. A great deal of that is already gone. The trade has speculated and gambled to an extraordinary extent. They have bid against each other most recklessly, formed companies and issued stock to the community for a large amount, got in a large amount of capital, and fallen over one another to give excessive prices for public-houses. They knew the risk when they got the public money and took tens and scores of millions of their own out in cash. It is a gigantic bubble, and it has been bursting for years. All the gas has been oozing out of it, and it is a very small one now. I have given in the Press quotations and prices, not one of which has been challenged, to show that the fall in the value of these brewery stocks took place at a time when the right hon. Gentleman opposite and his Party were in office. The fall was due to reckless inflation in prices and diminution in the consumption of liquor, with which this Bill has nothing to do. The fall in prices since this Government came into power has been extremely small, and there has been practically no special fall in the value of brewery stocks as compared with other securities, on the Stock Exchange as a result of the introduction of this Bill.

MR. GEORGE FABER: Because it will not pass.

*SIR THOMAS WHITTAKER: People who are alarmed about investments do not take risks like that. The country has been flooded with circulars that the trade is to be ruined, and that the widow and the orphan will have to go to the workhouse together. Is there any other security which could have maintained its price under such a deliberate attempt to create a scare? The good men who have been bellowing out these heartrending yells might as well have been in Central Africa for all the effect they produced on the Stock Exchange. The people who hold the shares do not believe them. Only present reasonable values can be considered. The hon. and learned Member for Kingston has made an extremely moderate and able statement; but it is of no use to tell the House what particular properties cost, or at what they stood in the books of the owners. The question is what they are worth now.

MR. CAVE (Surrey, Kingston): I happen to know that the properties which I mentioned as costing £550,000 are now bringing in more than 9 per cent.

*SIR THOMAS WHITTAKER: In that case they have ample means to provide a sinking fund. According to the hon. and learned Gentleman, of this £550,000 as much as £317,000 is borrowed on mortgage, and the compensation under this Bill would be £116,000. In other words the holders will lose the whole of their investment and the mortgagees nearly two-thirds of theirs. That implies that at the end of the period nothing will be available but the £116,000 compensation. But there will still be the premises. Public-houses are not worth nothing. No information is given as to their present value or assessment. But there cannot be the enormous loss calculated by the hon. and learned Gentleman; and since the owners are the licensees, they will get compensation for loss of business as well as the owners' compensation. If these properties are leasehold how long is it since they cost £550,000; and what have they been written down to now? The House was told of forty-three other houses in which the compensation actually paid was £104,000, and in respect of which under the Bill the owners would get only £18,000. That can only be because they are grossly under-assessed. The annual market value should be the assessment, and if it were, the compensation would work out as ample. It means that the public has been defrauded of rates and taxes and that these great values have been partially created by so defrauding the public. Now it is urged that because the public has been defrauded so long, it is not to exercise its legal rights. There can only be this inadequacy of compensation in cases where the assessment is grossly inadequate. The Bill gives twelve months to put this state of affairs right, and there will be a bonnie rush to get it right. I should like to come to the figures given by the hon. Member for Coventry; copies of which he has very courteously given me. He quoted six companies. Five of these companies published their balance-sheets; and one of them not, but the particulars were given to the hon. Member and therefore I shut that company off. I take the five companies whose balance sheets have been published and which I have in my possession. These companies were given as representative companies. In 1907 two of of them paid dividends of 3 per cent., one paid 2¾ per cent., another paid 1 per cent., and another paid nothing, and has not paid anything for years, and has not paid any interest for years on its preference shares. Are these companies to be accepted as simple cases? There is only one of them that has got a decent reserve fund. Three out of the other four ought not to have paid a divdend at all, the dividend which they declared should have gone to the reserve fund which was too small. One of them shows a deficiency of £800,000 in its own balance sheet, and we are asked to extend our deep sympathy towards this company on account of the loss which it will suffer under this Bill! The loss was got at by taking the amount at which the licensed premises stood in the balance sheets, and the amount they would be worth when the licence was gone. I find that in the premises are included the brewery, plant, stock, houses and goods in houses, loans on mortgage, the debts of the people to whom they sold their beer, interest and rents receivable, and goodwill. All that is included in the assets, and in order to ascertain what the licensed premises would be worth when the licences were taken away, only one-fifth was estimated as remaining, but the brewery, plant, stock, debts, and other things were all there, and the licence monopoly value was taken at four-fifths of that! The whole thing is preposterous. Take the case of one brewery. The property is said to be worth £2,371,800, and at the end of the time-limit what will be left? £474,360. But I find that the brewery alone is put down at £466,000, while there is in addition the whole of the houses, the mortgages, debts, interest and rent now due, and the stock in the houses. That is the kind of way in which the country is being misled. That is the sort of accountancy and expert evidence on which the companies were floated. It is a preposterous imposition on the credulity of the public, and to attempt to frighten widows and poor investors by a policy of this kind in order to defeat this Bill is discreditable. Expert evidence! I have looked into the market value of these five companies, and I find that their capital is £25,000,000, of which £22,000,000 is quoted on the London Stock Exchange. I want to know what was the value of it before this Bill was ever heard of. On 24th February, three days before the Bill was introduced, the price of the £22,000,000 quoted was £12,800,000, or a loss of £9,200,000, nearly 50 per cent. [AN HON. MEMBER on the OPPOSITION Benches: The Bill was mentioned in the King's Speech.] If I were to go back in my argument I could show that the fall took place long before the King's Speech, indeed before the party opposite went out of office. There has been remarkably little fall in brewery stocks since the present Government came into power; and in the case of one of these companies, the stock was higher after the Bill was brought in than before. The hon. Member for Coventry estimated that the loss would be £18,548,000, but I have shown that £9,200,000 has gone already. What was the cause of that? It was not the King's Speech. I have the balance sheet of a London brewery company for 1907–8 in which it is stated that the receipts from rents, interest on loans, etc. as compared with 1906–7 have declined £5,300, because the tenants of the public houses have found it increasingly difficult to pay their way. Was that also because of the King's Speech? The only reason why they should find increasing difficulty to pay their way was because they sold less liquor and made less profit. But that was not the result of the King's Speech. The loss shown in the market value of the stocks of the five companies

I have mentioned is £9,200,000, but that is not all. The ordinary shares stood at £7,700,000, but practically the ordinary shares as assets have gone and one-half of the preference capital has also gone, and they cannot replace that. What should be done? If these companies write down their capital to a fair amount they can face the future with equanimity. That is what some of the companies did. But we have companies which were floated on the public in the booming time where the debenture and preference stock represent the whole value of the assets. The promoters got in cash the real, reasonable, normal value of the whole concern, while there were no genuine assets against the watered stock of the ordinary shares, though they took their dividends upon them. And yet they talk to us about the poor investors! Others have drawn dividends ranging from 10 to 20 and 30 per cent. which ought never to have been taken to such an extent until ample revenues had been built up. The "Coach and Horses" was bought by the Portsmouth United Breweries Company, which paid a dividend of 30 per cent. for four years, and they had a reserve of only £10,000, and during these four years apparently they had not added a penny to reserve. The right hon. Gentleman talked about prudent finance. That is not prudent finance.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: It is prudent finance if the policy of the Under-Secretary for the Home Office is carried out.

*SIR THOMAS WHITTAKER: Another company had a reserve of £170,000 and during the last twelve months they have taken £100,000 of that reserve and distributed it as a bonus in the form of free ordinary shares to the ordinary shareholders. That was watering their capital. There are three classes of brewery companies. One consists of good and sound, reasonably capitalised, and well managed concerns, paying dividend and building up a sound reserve fund. Next we have fair companies reasonably capitalised, paying too much dividend and setting aside too little for the reserve. There is another lot of companies of various grades altogether over-capitalised. What is a fair capital for an undertaking of this kind? I would venture to say that the capital should not be more than would make the annual net profit over the whole show at 7 per cent. It is a risky industrial investment depending on the *personnel* to some extent of the management, and 7 per cent. over the whole would pay a reasonable capitalisation. If they had done that with one-third debentures, one-third preference shares, and one-third ordinary shares, they could have paid a handsome dividend, keeping up a good reserve fund at the same time, and faced this Bill with equanimity. It may be said that this is ideal and fantastic, but I have gone into the accounts of 142 brewery companies, and have got them investigated, and have all the particulars by one of the best firms of chartered accountants in the City of London. I took, first of all, thirty good, sound companies, with a capital of £22,000,000. Their average net profit over the whole concern was 8½ per cent. They paid an average dividend last year—one of the worst years for companies—of 12½ per cent., and they put aside for reserve £319,000. The total reserve of these companies was £4,750,000—21 per cent. of their capital. If we take half of their premises—plant, loans, stock, and goodwill—as representing the monopoly value of the licensed houses, these brewery companies during the next fifteen years, by doing nothing more than they have done during the past fifteen years, will pay their average 12½ per cent. dividend all along the line, and at the end wipe off the whole of their licence value. In making this calculation nothing is put down for an increase of trade that will accrue to the remaining houses for reduction of licences or for growth of population. They are good average brewery companies with a large number of tied houses, with an average capital of £750,000, and I do not include special concerns like Bass' or Guinness'. Then there are thirty companies that I will describe as "good to middling." Their capital is £13,000,000, and the average is £432,000. Their average profit is 7 per cent. over the whole, and the average dividend was 9½ per cent. last year. To reserve they put past £93,000, and the reserve fund is £1,428,000, or 11 per cent. of their capital. These companies can meet this Bill and wipe out the whole of their licence value, paying 6 to 7 per cent. every year from now up to the time of the limit expiry. Here is no ruin, no robbery. Then I have another batch of eighty-two which I describe as poor and weak. Their share capital is £75,000,000 and their average capital is £900,000 each. Four are in liquidation; thirty-three of them, with a capital of £27,500,000, not only pay nothing on their ordinary shares but are in arrears on their preference shares. Their debentures are £13,000,000 and their ordinary shares £4,000,000, while their reserve fund is only £357,000. Fourteen of them have no reserve at all, and the average of the lot is 1½ per cent. reserve. They have divided almost every penny they can lay their hands on. Then I come to twenty-four which pay no dividend upon their ordinary shares. Their capital is £13,000,000 and their reserve fund is £705,000, or 5½ per cent., and some of them have no reserve fund at all. It is from these companies that there come the hard cases which have been circulated, and whenever a man writes to the papers and says he will take an actual case it is invariably one of these. Many of them had lost half their share capital before this present Government came into office. Then I will take twenty-one companies which pay dividends of from 1 to 3 per cent. Their capital is £32,500,000 and their reserve £1,450,000, or 4½ per cent. They ought never to have paid their dividends in most cases. There you have 142 companies representing £110,000,000 of capital with reserves running down from 21 per cent. to 2½ per cent. and some of them 1 per cent. Their average dividend runs from 12½ per cent. to *nil*. There are 150 other companies, with a capital of £50,000,000, which do not issue public balance sheets, and you cannot get them, as they will not send them; but I have dealt with those representing a capital of £110,000,000, and those represent three-fourths of the brewery companies and licensed houses in England and Wales, and therefore I think you have a fair idea of what the position is. Good and sound companies, thoroughly good ones, can take this Bill in their stride and never turn a hair. A great many others can go along and pay 6 or 7 per cent., and a great many of the others cannot do it because they are over-capitalised and are not paying dividends on their ordinary shares to-day, and therefore obviously ought to be reconstructed and largely written down. May I take another view, and that is, What is the amount of capital in the trade at stake under this Bill? What is the monopoly value? I mentioned in the debates of 1904 that my estimate of the market value of the licences in England and Wales was £125,000,000. That is the result of rather a high estimate, and they have fallen, they have come down now, and they are not worth more than £100,000,000. I took the estimates of the *Brewers' Almanac* and the Brewers' Society of the capital of the trade, and if you deduct from their estimate a reasonable allowance for Scotland and Ireland you will find, extraordinarily, that both these estimates come out at something like £190,000,000 as the total capital value of all the breweries and licensed properties in England and Wales. Therefore, when people talk and write about £200,000,000 and £300,000,000 as being the value of the licences alone, they do not know what they are talking about and are altogether wide of the mark. Of that £190,000,000, how much represents monopoly value? About half, or £95,000,000 or close upon my £100,000,000. During the time-limit a number of these houses will be wiped out and paid for. They will get £12,000,000, and that leaves £83,000,000 to be provided by the trade at the end of the time-limit, and they have altogether got towards this in one way or another, £20,000,000 in the shape of reserve funds or amounts already written off. An hon. Gentleman smiles, but I am dealing with what the trade has got to do. I am not arguing the justice but the possibilities, and I say that going on these lines we have got the sum down to £83,000,000 which has to be met, and towards that they have got £20,000,000. That means that they have £63,000,000 to provide—call it roughly £70,000,000—which at 4 per cent. means £3,500,000 a year, and at 5 per cent. £3,250,000. That is what they have to deal with, and I say that every other trade in the country almost every year of its existence has to cope with greater variations of cost and prices than there are in this trade. What did you do with the sugar and confectionery trade? You called upon them to deal with a tax of £6,000,000 in one year. Take the woollen trade, in which my constituency is interested; they will let you know something about variations in recent prices of wool. Every trade has its variations to deal with, and this can be done with ease, and the trade will be in a sounder position in the end than they are now, and we only compel what sound finance dictates. We are told that the compensation is inadequate; but it will only be inadequate if the assessment is under the mark. We were told by the hon. Member for Kingston that it is unjust that these people should pay the levy and get nothing, that they are put in the position of paying for an insurance, and they should get something in the end. He scoffed at the idea that people would ever pay for life insurance on this basis. I know something about life insurance, and he will find that there are thousands of policies issued every year to cover the contingency of death during a given period. If the death occurs during that period the insurers will get the money, but if the life survives they will get nothing, and if you want to insure something on death or at the end of the term of insurance as well as insurance during the time, you pay a higher premium. It is a matter of temporary and contingent insurance. If you insure your house against fire you do not expect to have the money at the end if you do not have a fire. This is a case of mutual insurance and the position is this: What it means is that the licence-holder has to have a fourteen years run or compensation, and he will have either the run or be compensated, but he does not have both the run and the compensation. It is either the one or the other, the run or the compensation. Then the hon. Gentleman says that at the end of the time the trade will go on but the State will take the profit. That is not so. The brewer will make his ordinary wholesale profit of the brewing trade, the retailer will make the ordinary profit on what he sells in his public-house. It is the monopoly profit which the State will take and nothing more. Someone says: "How would you like it?" Well, if I were the tenant of a shop, having bought the business carried on in the shop under an annual tenancy at a very low rent, and the landlord came to me and said: "You got that shop at too low a rent. Quite true, you bought the business with the shop at a low rent, and you perhaps expected it to go on, but I never said it would, and I really must have a proper rent for it; but you may have calculated at the time that it would go on, and I will give you fourteen years notice, and at the end of that time I will have a proper rent." What should I say? I should say: "I have got the most generous landlord in the country." Now something has been made of the ante-1869 beer-houses. Every one knows that the 1869 beer-house has a special and privileged position, but it is a mistake to think that the Act of 1869 gave it that position; it was in a much more privileged position before that Act, which took away some of its privileges but left it with some privileges. It did not create privileges, it left them with some, and the conditions on which licences were granted to ante-1869 beer-houses have been more than once altered by the State, and it was never implied that they would never be altered again. [A laugh.] The hon. Member scoffs at that, but let me give him an illustration. He will remember that the Act of 1869 also gave this special privilege to "off" beer licences, and "off" and "on" were in the same position, but Parliament took it away from the "off" under the Bill of 1882, and did it at the instigation of the trade. The liquor trade did not like these outside traders, and the late Lord Ritchie, as Captain Ritchie, promoted that Bill at the instigation of the trade and carried it through. The trade, when it suited their purpose, wiped out the special provision in the case of the "off" licences without any fourteen years notice. Moreover, they brought about the Over Darwen cases. It was the trade that opposed this renewal of licences at Over Darwen and got seven or eight-and-twenty of them wiped out without a moments' concern. What did they do for the unemployed? It is a very different thing if they do it, but why, if it is fair to deprive the "off" ante-1869 licence of its special position, is it unjust to do the same for the ante-1869 "on" licence? Mr. Candy, Q.C., on that occasion told the licensed victuallers that they were very unwise in acting as they did, and said they had been making whips for the backs of others which would some day be used upon themselves. Something was said about "resuming property you had parted with." The State has not parted with it in any such sense as is thus implied, and we are not going to resume it in any such sense. If you let a house on an annual tenancy you part with the use and occupation of it for the time, and at the end of the year you may resume possession of it. It does not mean that you are taking property from the tenant. He has only had the use of it for a limited time on certain conditions, and you are only going to resume possession of your own. It was never his, in the sense of ownership. Nothing that the tenant may have presumed can possibly affect the owner's rights, and the State is in the same position. All this trouble has arisen because the brewers have departed from their legitimate business. They have ignored the intention of the law; they have ignored the public convenience. They have evaded what the law intended, and themselves caused the inflation of prices which is now going to hang them. They aimed at defeating the public interest, and at preventing free competition and supply. Then there is another thing. It is a policy of grasping greed. They were not satisfied with the wholesale profit, but must have half the retail profit as well, and what has been the result? During all these years they have squeezed half the profits of the publican's trade out of the publican. They have squeezed out half their profits, and having got that they make it a ground for claiming better treatment, and make it a reason for preventing us from exercising our rights. The tied houses have long been one of the curses of this country. A Committee in 1818 reported on this matter, and this is what they said—

> "We view with apprehension the spread of proprietary public houses, regarding it as an abuse of the licensing system, and feel we cannot reprobate in too strong terms the disgraceful practice among brewers of supplying proprietary houses with inferior liquor to that which the retail part of the trade are supplied with."

They also give a forecast of the provisions of this Bill, for in their Report to this House they suggest an enactment of "some prospective law which, at a given period," shall direct the magistrate to refuse licences to such houses as shall be shown to be in substance the property of a brewer. Sixty years later, another committee, a Select Committee of the House of Lords, reported on this question. A committee which had the Duke of Westminster for its Chairman, the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, Dr. Magee, the Bishop of Peterborough, Lord Kimberley, Lord Aberdare, and Lord Colleston, among its members. None of those were Socialists; none of them could be described as robbers and confiscators. What did they do? Having referred to the reduction in the number of licenced houses in proportion to population which had followed the legislation of 1869 and 1872, they said—

> "The effect of this legislation has been largely to raise the value of this property, and it would seem but just that the public should receive a greater portion than hitherto of the profits of a monopoly thus artificially created."

That comes from the other end of this building—

> "The Committee recommend that a considerable increase should be made in the duty on excise licences."

That was what the Lords thought of this at the end of forty years, and these tied-houses still continue to corrupt the administration and evade the law. One of these committees reported that one of the great brewing firms in London, a firm which still exists, engaged as its solicitor the clerk to the justices at Bow Street, and also the clerk to the licensing justices. It is shown that in those days you could not get a licence until you made an arrangement with the brewer to take his beer and then through the clerk, to the justices, the brewers' solicitor you got a licence. The whole thing was manœuvred. Now let me give two precedents. We did away with the slave trade; we abolished it and we paid not a farthing as compensation. When we gave compensation it was because we took the slaves who were the property of their owner and equivalent to his stock. We stopped the trade in which millions were invested without paying a penny in compensation. But when we took the slaves, the permanent property of their owners, did we pay their full value? No. We gave a time notice and commutation. But I have a better case than that, the case of the Church leases. For 200 years the Church authorities of this country granted leases of church property on such terms as the law allowed, but they always renewed them on payment of a fine. They either leased for lives or for three terms of seven years each, making twenty-one years in all, and they always renewed. The expectation of renewal became an exceedingly valuable property. The expectation was bought, sold, and bequeathed. Death duties were charged on it. The Court of Chancery in settling marriage settlements settled the expectation of renewal on grand children and great grand children. A great amount of property was built on land leased in this way, and when the matter had to be settled by the Court as it had in some cases, the Court of Chancery gave the tenants two-thirds and the Church one-third of the value. In 1860 everyone of these leases was put an end to. In 1860 they decided that after 1884 there should be no extension of any leases. These leases were in three terms of seven years each. As soon as one of these terms ran out, leaving fourteen years to run it had been the invariable custom to grant another term so as to keep three terms going. There was not a lease that had less than fourteen years to run. So that all they got was an addition of ten years. But those which were not so short as fourteen years got less. The average extension of lease was from five to ten years and these leases were terminated by a time-notice. I commend that to the notice of the lawyers of this House with due hope that they will look into it. We have no desire to do injustice, we have every desire not to do an injustice, to anyone. The suggestion that we are vindictive to the trade is absolutely untrue. We have no personal interest of any kind. We are doing our best to grapple with what admittedly is a gigantic evil. We have heard little of that evil from the other side. All the talk of hon. Gentlemen opposite has been about property of interest and of dividends. Property in what? In a right to debase, to degrade, and to destroy. We have heard a good deal of talk about Socialism. I am one of the last in the world who would be regarded a Socialist, and I agree with my right hon. friend the Prime Minister when he said the real friends of property were making a great mistake in associating with other classes of property annual licences. Temperance reform and the prosperity of the licensed trade are antagonistic, and therefore any attempt to bring about temperance reform, and also maintain the well-being and prosperity of the trade, is futile. All we can do is to make some arrangement, some compromise, by which the people who have invested money in the trade can with ordinary prudence and care get the reasonable value of these licences back during this period of time. And I venture to say I have brought facts to show that it is perfectly feasible to do so by all concerned. Therefore I ask the House to take this substantial step forward in a direction which will do much to promote the well-being and happiness of our nation.

*MR. BOTTOMLEY (Hackney, S.): I rise for the purpose of renewing, in a humble sort of way, the opposition I felt constrained to offer to this Bill on its First Reading—an opposition based upon the ground that the Bill is founded upon a total misapprehension of the true character of the drink evil; that it is an unnecessary Bill, and that it is an unjust one. I confess in approaching it from that point of view, I felt for a little time in some difficulty as to how I was to follow the hon. Member to whose remarkable speech we have just listened. For a time I was reminded of the saying of a learned Judge who, after listening for several hours to an eminent counsel's technical argument, said—

> "I cannot profess to have followed you through the whole of your arguments, but they are far too technical not to prevail."

As regards much of the speech, I was beginning to believe that I was totally mistaken hitherto in my conception; that the whole licensing system was in the hands of certain heartless, wicked, and hopelessly improvident public companies, whose conduct has been immoral throughout, and whose system of finance is rotten to the core, and yet upon whom a compassionate Liberal Government proposes to confer some skilfully-disguised financial blessing which only the highly-technical knowledge of the hon. Member for Spen Valley could make clear to the House. But, after all, I remembered that there were some persons engaged in this trade who were unconnected with brewery companies, and on that point I thought we might be allowed to say a word or two. When, however, the hon. Member came down from the region of high finance in which he gave the House credit for greater intelligence and understanding than I profess to possess, and when he came to apply some of those high theories to practical tests, then I thought I should have no more difficulty in putting him right in his figures than I shall have in a few minutes' time in putting him right in his law. The difficulty one feels in dealing with the hon. Member and his friends is that their facts, figures, and arguments, like their faith in this matter, have become an obsession, and when a man has reached that fanatical stage anyone who seeks to question his views is put in the category of unrighteous sons of darkness. Still, I think I can show that these ardent exponents of temperance reform may be living in a fool's paradise in regard to their facts and figures. Now, Mr. Speaker, in pursuing my attitude of opposition to this measure, I am not deterred by the fact that an hon. Member said that my opposition was the hall-mark of the real merits of this Bill—though it is very difficult to reconcile that observation with the frantic appeals which I have received from the society of which he is a distinguished officer to reconsider my position, nor am I to be deterred by the fact that the hon. and learned Solicitor-General, in one of those moments of inexpensive generosity which frequently accompany the sudden advent of great prosperity, even in the Celtic character, made a present of my support to the Party opposite. All I have to say on that subject is that however long I may be spared to be a Member of this House, my support may always be rather given away than bought or sold. And in pursuing this line, neither will I be deterred by the hon. Member for Appleby, who said in the course of his speech that this was a struggle between the forces of good and evil. I respectfully associate myself with what I may call the well-deserved castigation which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Dublin administered to the Member for Appleby, for what he called the arrogance and insolence of that phrase. But if the right hon. Member for South Dublin had known what a Parliamentary refinement that was compared with what the hon. Member for Appleby has said elsewhere, he would doubtless have made the castigation even more severe, because the hon. Member for Appleby said on another occasion not that the struggle was between good and evil, but between Heaven and Hell.

*MR. LEIF JONES: I was referring to a quotation from Mr. Buxton, an eminent brewer, who wrote on this question.

*MR. BOTTOMLEY: Well, Sir, I have heard of a certain distinguished potentate quoting scripture to suit his purpose, but when it comes to a temperance reformer quoting an eminent brewer for the purpose of emphasising his views, then I feel that I must look upon his statement with some amount of suspicion. But the hon. Member will not deny that when he quoted the eminent brewer he wholly adopted him. I am not going to enter on any complicated theological question, as to how far the reverend prelates of Manchester and other places are the forces of Hell or the forces of Heaven; but I do protest generally against this class of argument on a purely political question. I should have thought that the meanest amenities of this House would have given credit to all parties in it for the fullest intention and desire to deal with this great evil.

*MR. LEIF JONES: Perhaps the hon. Member will allow me to explain. I do not want to be constantly interrupting him. I made no charge against the character of those who are opposing the Bill at all. They are defending a bad cause, but good men have done that many times before.

*MR. BOTTOMLEY: I accept the disclaimer of the hon. Member in so far as it applies to me, and I am to take it that, in a dialectical sense only, I am on the side of Hell against Heaven. But I would venture to say that the observation does occur to me that, whether or not it be true that righteousness exalteth a nation, self-righteousness does not exalt the dignity or character of debate in this House. I will endeavour to answer some of the arguments used by the Member for Spen Valley as I go along. Now, Sir, I listened to the Prime Minister on the First Reading, and I had a suspicion at the time of what I found to be the fact, and which reminded me of an event which has occurred in the lives of many of us, namely, when the family physician bursts into the room and conveys to us the tidings of a new offspring whose merits and charms he finds it impossible to exaggerate. But when we come to make personal examination of the new arrival, we invariably find it to be the ordinary commonplace sort of a squalling brat. I do not mean to say that the right hon. Gentleman carelessly or intentionally misled the House, but there were one or two provisions in the Bill which, in his exposition of it, must have escaped his memory. He did not tell us, for instance, that whereas a wealthy gentleman at the West End is to remain at liberty to purchase wholesale quantities of wines and spirits at his club, the working-man is not to be permitted to take home half-a-pint of beer or a half-quartern of gin, perhaps for the mollification of his wife when he arrives home rather late, or for any other purpose. The right hon. Gentleman did not tell us of the provision, to my mind an extraordinary provision, in this Bill, extending Sunday closing to passenger vessels. He said nothing about the conditions under which the captain of the vessel who has to navigate it is to take care that he is not running the risk of being fined £50 for any person being on board his vessel in a state of inebriation. Nor did the right hon. Gentleman tell us of another extraordinary provision which would affect overworked policemen and add to their duties. Not only has a policeman to take notes of street-corner lecturers, and make notes of any blasphemy, and of lost dogs and of itinerant bookmakers, but he is to have thrown upon him the further duty whenever he sees a brewer's van delivering goods of inspecting the order-book to see that it correctly records the goods to be delivered. The officer has to take out his pencil, he has to examine the delivery book, and he has to do double entry and make a balance. No wonder with these additional duties put upon the police that the Camden Town murderer is still at large. We have also had an exposition of the Bill by various Ministers both in the House and out of it, and I am bound to say that I find that I have not the slightest reason to modify the attitude I took on the last occasion. On what does the Bill proceed? It proceeds, first of all, on the assumption that there is an immediate, definite, scientific connection between the extent of the facilities for obtaining alcoholic drink and the extent of the drink evil. That is the first hypothesis, because the whole operative force of the Bill, except in regard to such minor matters as I have just referred to, proceeds on this basis. I say in the presence of the hon. Member for Spen Valley and his temperance colleagues, and I say it with a knowledge of the statistics and history of this matter second only to his own, that there is not an atom of evidence anywhere in justification of that contention. You may pick out here and there two or three or four instances where the reduction in facilities has resulted in less drunkenness. On the other hand, you may pick out thousands of cases where the reverse has been the effect. It is not, however, a question of arrests for drunkenness. That, it has rightly been pointed out, may be a matter of the greater or lesser activity of the police. The test of the efficacy of this kind of legislation is this:—Do you get a less total consumption of alcoholic liquor? That is the test, and nothing else. I make myself responsible for the statement of the fact that whereas the drinking habits of the people have been steadily decreasing during the past fifteen or twenty years those decreases have taken place mainly where restrictive legislation has been least enforced. Wherever you have had restrictions you have had as a general rule, either stationary or increased consumption of alcoholic drink. One does not require to know more than a little of human nature to realise that that would be the case. Licensing statistics confirm my statement that licensing restrictions have never brought about a less consumption of alcoholic drink. The Report of the Royal Commission itself teems with opinions to that effect. Official statistics of countries which have restrictive legislation—Scotland, Wales, and Ireland—show that they are becoming every year more drunken. In Glasgow I find the authorities meeting, according to their agendas, to consider "the alarming increase in drunkenness." When I come to deal with Sunday closing, I will show that every Monday morning the charges of drunkenness in Glasgow are about equivalent to the charges we get in London after a Bank Holiday. I do not want to go over the same ground again and again, but to give one striking instance. I have investigated the figures for the nearest Continental places I can get. In France there is practically free trade in drink. Any respectable citizen of France may open what, for the purposes of this discussion, one must call a public-house. That public-house may, practically speaking, remain open always. Let me give the House what, to my mind, is a most startling fact—which absolutely disposes of the suggestion that restriction has any bearing upon the question of drunkenness. With free trade in France, and unlimited hours, what does the House think were the total charges of drunkenness throughout all France last year? Just to get a comparative idea I think the average in London alone is something like 400 a day, although on a Sunday it is very much less; whilst for the whole of England it is 200,000 a year. But the total number of charges of drunkenness in France during the whole of last year were 623 and for Paris, 270. The hon. Member for Spen Valley commented on the fact that we had 50 per cent. more licensed premises in proportion to population than Scotland had. We have 50 per cent. more licensed premises and much less drunkenness. I will not follow references to Sidney Smith or to the 17th century, but I will content myself with the reference to the official figures issued by the Home Office, that there is no evidence anywhere that restrictive licensing legislation has reduced the total consumption of drink. I am glad to say there has been a reduction, but you cannot associate that diminution with restrictive legislation. The next idea of the Government seems to be that Sunday must be chosen for special legislation. In the provinces the Sunday hours are reduced as compared with those in London, but nobody can tell us why. Does the Government mean that the provinces are less able to withstand temptation? The extraordinary power is given by this Bill to make the condition on a renewal of a licence of absolute or partial Sunday closing. If there is some special evil attaching to Sunday opening, why is it left to the justices and not to Parliament to deal with it? The Prime Minister said that this is one of the things recommended by the Royal Commission. Yes, but the Royal Commission said it was one of the things that ought not to be left to the justices. I ventured to say on the First Reading that it was not so much crowded public-houses as empty churches and chapels that were agitating the minds of the Government. The Home Office recently took a period of three months in a Return with regard to arrests for drunkenness in London. For Mondays the number was 3,966, for Saturdays 2,001, and for Sundays 946. I want to know why for Sundays there should be this special legislation and not for Saturdays or Mondays. If the Bill be a Sabbatarian measure, why not say so? Sunday closing has been a terrible failure everywhere. The licensing justices are saying in Scotland—and it is beyond dispute—that restrictive legislation on Sundays creates a greater evil than it cures. Why has Sunday been chosen for special legislation—the day of the week on which there is the least drunkenness? Why has it been chosen if not in regard to a question of some other character than temperance? Some people say, to protect the employees of the trade. There is a sort of protection which vultures give to lambs. I will leave the question of Sunday closing. And now I press the Under-Secretary for the Home Office for information with regard to complaints of drunkenness on passenger vessels. Why are passenger vessels plying on Sundays chosen for special legislation? Under this Bill the hours are to be shortened for Sunday refreshments. Everyone knows that the result will be that people will struggle to get their meals and refreshments in the limited period thus allowed. Or are the passengers to take their liquors on board with them? Then, the captain is to be fined £50 in the case of a person being discovered on board in a state of inebriation! Is he to look after the drinking of the passengers and thereby fail to look after the security of his craft? Again, why Sunday closing? There is another provision in the interests of temperance. Again, on Sunday a man is to walk six miles for a glass of beer, and back again six miles. If the public-house is only five and three-quarter miles away he will have to go further on. A thirsty traveller, with his parched tongue hanging out, is to walk there and back for a glass of ale, and you may imagine how he will bless the Liberal Government. I think if any poor fellow walks so far he deserves his glass of beer. But why should he be compelled to do it on a Sunday and not on a Saturday? Give powers to the justices to close on other days besides Sunday, and then you will soon see what the nation thinks. The justices are also to have the power to close public-houses on polling days. If there is any provision in the Bill for which there is no justification that is one. I have questioned the Home Secretary as to the arrests for drunkenness during the recent by-elections. He said he would make inquiries. Why close houses on polling days? What is the evil? What is the vice? What has happened? Where are the arrests? In the Hastings election there was not a single arrest—in the first election fought on this Licensing Bill. In Peckham one man only was arrested. And in Manchester the President of the Board of Trade, with a magnanimity and generosity which does credit to his character, admitted that the contest had been characterised by decorum and sobriety. These are facts or inventions. If facts, why close the houses on polling days? I want some hon. Member who understands the matter to tell me. At present I fail to see why there should be closing on Sundays and polling days. Then there is the delicate question of the barmaid. There is a great deal in that question, and behind that question, as far as the Government is concerned. I have here the report of a deputation which waited on the Home Secretary in February last year—one of those deputations the Government is so ready to lend an ear to—consisting of persons who seem to be regarded as experts in these great matters. The deputation was introduced by the Bishop of Southwark and Mrs. Ramsay Macdonald, and other ladies, including one from the Salvation Army, were there. These people spoke to the Home Secretary about the evils and dangers to barmaids, as though they were entitled to be treated as experts. According to the report the Home Secretary assured the deputation that, generally speaking, he was in agreement with the object and arguments they had advanced. He was convinced that the employment of girls and women in bars was open to objection on grounds of temperance and morals, and he promised to deal with the matter in his forthcoming Bill. At that time, no doubt, it was assumed that the Home Secretary would be in charge of the Bill. Well, the barmaids became alive to the matter, and some months afterwards they had a deputation, and they were introduced to the Home Secretary by people who were barmaids, or were officials of women's trade associations, and having heard their arguments the Home Secretary, having explained that they must not take too literally what he said to the previous deputation, said—

> "I can assure you of this, that any Government or any party will think twice or thrice before doing anything which would seriously interfere or generally interfere with the employment of women."

That was the assurance given by the Home Secretary to the barmaids. Now what do we find here? We find that justices are to have an absolute discretion and power to prohibit the employment of barmaids. Is that a fulfilment of the promise that the Government would think twice and thrice before interfering with the employment of these women? Again, I respectfully ask the Home Secretary, why the exclusion of barmaids? Has there been one case before the Courts in the last twenty or thirty years justifying the contention that the trade of barmaid is conducive to immorality or intemperance? I have searched the reports, but I have found no case, and I want to know where I shall find one. On the other hand, the presence of barmaids has had a good influence on the trade, and that being so, why the abolition of the barmaids? Then there is the exclusion of children from public-houses. It sounds plausible to say: "Don't allow the child to go into the public-house." Let a buxom wench of eighteen years go in as much as you like. The drunkard will not look at her. It is on the little child that he will cast eyes and to whom he will address wrong observations. If you study licensing statistics you will find this extraordinary feature about them, that whilst intemperance is decreasing among the general community it is increasing among females. That means that now you do not allow the child to go to the public-house the mother goes there herself. The Child Messenger Act, splendid as it was in its object, has done more to add to increased intemperance among women in this country than anything else, and I ask again if the Government will not reconsider the question? And, in any case, do be a little more definite. Do not leave it to local authorities to define what is a child. The Government has not the courage to do that. I commend to the Under-Secretary my statement that the restriction as to sending children as messengers for their parents has had the alarming effect of creating a vast army of female drinkers. Then there is the provision about clubs. I will only ask why we are not taken into the confidence of the Government without waiting till after the Second Reading? Is it or is it not intended to withdraw the police inspection? I want to know. Have the Government, or have they not, made up their minds to withdraw that invidious and stupid provision? I am not in the Cabinet secrets, but somehow or other I will make myself responsible for the statement that the Government are going to withdraw it; but they dare not tell their temperance friends until they get their Second Reading. Everybody outside the Government knows, with regard to the time-limit, that it is going to be extended, but the Prime Minister dare not tell his temperance friends that they have to stomach another seven years. I only make that statement because the Government claim so much credit for its courage. The hon. Member for Spen Valley talked about not including in the 1904 Act any provision about clubs. I expected some hon. Gentleman opposite to get up and say that there was an Act passed in 1902 for the express purpose of governing clubs, and which Act is capable of dealing with every evil incidental to club life. How can you close public-houses and at the same time put no restriction upon clubs? If you take a census of membership of working men's clubs of London to-day it is common knowledge that it has gone up enormously during the past few years. It is not the number of clubs; it is the membership you have to consider, and the membership will go up every week, and will go up in proportion as you close the other places in which men can get refreshment. Mr. Speaker, what evidence is there that this Bill is needed? The best evidence on the point is the evidence of the hon. Member for Spen Valley. In the early days of this controversy, when the Bill was first being talked about, he criticised the fact that the depreciation of brewery securities was not due in any way to the Licensing Bill. I came across a letter which contained this extraordinary phrase—

> "There must be a further reason for depreciation in brewery stocks. During the last three years public-houses have done on the average a much smaller trade than they did seven years ago. In the first place, there has been a falling-off in the consumption of the drink per head of the population. The result is, I assume, that the public-houses and beer-houses of England and Wales have during the last three years sold on an average fifteen millions sterling worth of drink per year less than seven years ago."

I expect that is true. But was there ever in history a Government coming forward with a great comprehensive Bill to deal with a social evil which its own chief supporters have admitted is automatically curing itself and diminishing at an enormous rate? I ask the Under-Secretary again why this wonderful hurry to rush through this Bill for reducing the facilities of drinking? These reductions are going on under the 1904 Act. Of course, it is said that the 1904 Act is an Act which we are entitled to throw on one side. I have been thinking a good deal during this discussion about one aspect of the matter. Before the 1904 Act there was a general misconception as to the general state of the licensing law. The 1904 Act was introduced to put the matter on some surer basis. That Bill has been passed; it is working in the direction of a steady reduction in licences, but almost before it gets into its stride—to use the phrase of the hon. Member for Spen Valley—you propose to repeal it. I wonder if the House remembers that somewhere about the same time as the "Sharp *v.* Wakefield" decision the House of Lords gave another decision which upset the general idea with regard to another matter. I refer to the Taff Vale decision. Because that decision put a totally new conception on the law, the very first thing this Government did was to introduce the Trade Disputes Bill. It would be quite possible for the Opposition, when they come back to power, to at once introduce a measure saying: "We will not recognise your Trade Disputes Act. It put the law on a wrong basis. It was a compromise and we will alter it." I now come to what, after all, are the provisions of the Bill regarded as essential. I refer to the question of the time-limit. There are two phrases used by the Government. It is intended, first of all, to recover dominion over licensed premises—a dominion which the State has never lost, a dominion which it has to-day to the fullest extent. Secondly, it is to recover the ownership of the monopoly value—a thing which it never had. I ask the House what is the meaning of the words to recover a dominion or to recover an ownership which it never possessed. I listened with profound respect to the argument of the hon. Member for Spen Valley, and I confess I was startled when he told us that it would be quite an easy thing for two out of three classes of brewery companies to go on paying their handsome dividends of 5, or 6, or 12 per cent., and make full provision for the resumption by the State of the monopoly value. He said—

> "They have only to go on putting so much to the reserve, and the thing is done."

But I thought this Bill was to be a temperance measure, and that it was going to reduce the sale of drink. If you reduce the number of licences, the hon. Member assumes that the same amount of drink will be consumed, the same dividends are to be paid, and the reserve fund is to be continued. It was the argument of the hon. Member for Spen Valley that the brewery companies would automatically continue on exactly the same lines as they are to-day. They were to suffer nothing except to give up to the State that which belonged to themselves. I do not know whether it occurred to hon. Members who heard that argument how it cut both ways. But whatever may be the effect of the reduction in the case of rich breweries, some of them that are poor and struggling would be wiped out of existence, involving ruin to thousands of innocent people. But, of course, they do not count. May I, however, remind the House that this is not a Bill to deal with the capitalisation of joint stock companies, it is to deal with the sale of drink. I do not think that the House has a right to inquire into the ownership of licensed premises. If brewery companies own them, they bought them. It is property legitimately acquired, and all this talk about brewery companies seems to me to be perfectly away from the point. We have been told that in fourteen years the Government will take over the licences or the monopoly value. I have struggled hard to know what the Government mean to take over. The hon. Member for Spen Valley says that the Government will charge a fair rent. A fair rent for what? It cannot mean a fair rent for the premises. What about the poor struggling men who have sixty years leases? It is all very well to talk of the rich brewery companies, but all licensed houses are not owned by rich companies. I have here a letter from the secretary of St. Thomas's Hospital—an institution which I suppose the hon. Member for Spen Valley would be desirous to protect. They have asked me as the representative of the constituency in which they happen to have four licensed premises with eighty years leases to do my very best to prevent those leases from falling into their hands under the proposals in this Bill. Why not take over the leases in such cases? Do you think that a man who has been lured and decoyed into putting capital into the trade should be left with his premises, which are fitted up for the liquor trade and for no other trade? It seems to me a just criticism on this Bill to say that it is a fiscal measure rather than a temperance measure. What a lot of nonsense is talked about the law on the subject. Even learned lawyers very much misunderstand the legal aspect of the question. From time immemorial it has been settled law that wherever any tribunal had the duty of exercising discretion that discretion must not be exercised at the caprice of the tribunal, but must be judicially exercised honestly between man and man, having regard to their livelihoods, their just expectations and their interests. That was settled in a case which was decided in the time of Queen Elizabeth, and is known to lawyers as Brookes' case. The hon. Member for Spen Valley has stated that there is no such thing as the renewal of a licence, and that it is always a new licence that is granted annually. Many Acts of Parliament dealing with the licensing question contain the express term that a licence shall be renewed. What I do want to say is that, relying on the compromise of the 1904 Act everybody has assumed that the state of the law will remain as settled by that Act. The State assumed it by valuing and rating licensed property as though it were going to be annually renewed. As to this talk about assessment, I never heard of such nonsense in my life. This Bill sets up a standard of its own that the monopoly value is the difference between the value of the premises with and without a licence and then complains because the premises in the past have not been assessed on a special basis. There is another aspect that I wish to refer to very briefly. I wish to know what evidence there is that anybody wants the Bill. I am told the Churches want it. I see no particular evidence that this Bill is demanded by the Churches. I know that a protest was signed by 350 members of the clergy in the diocese of Peterborough, protesting against the action of the Bishop in supporting the Bill, and I know that the Bishop of Manchester and other bishops are strongly opposed to it. My own view has always been that in mundane matters the views of the Bishops do not count; they have always been wrong—at any rate that was part of the political creed of the Liberal Party not so long ago. They had much better confine themselves to their legitimate sphere—dealing with the problem of another world, and if they happen to be wrong in that case too, they will never be found out. It is a strange thing for the Liberal Party to found its faith on the impregnable rock of the Episcopal Bench. There has been one great meeting in London in support of the Bill. It was presided over by the hon. Member for Appleby, who indulged in a hurricane of fanatical rhodomontade, and was addressed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who spoke in flamboyant language. He spoke about ascending to a brighter and a purer firmament and all that sort of thing, whilst, of course, the hon. Member for Spen Valley and others followed his example. The only practical, sensible observation was made by the hon. Member for Woolwich, who said that people were driven to the public-house by the smells of their rack-rented dens. But that is not the theory of this Bill. A disturbance was caused, according to one report, by a brewers' drayman, and the meeting broke out into a hymn, the second line of which was, "Let angels prostrate fall," at which stage, says the veracious reporter, the brewers' drayman was dropped into the street. I suppose this Bill will receive a Second Reading on Monday by the usual automatic majority—to be an obedient unit in which appears to be the apotheosis of the ambition of some of my hon. friends. It will be sent up to the Lords with no evidence that the country wants it, but that come what may, stand or fall, reckless of consequences, prepared, in the words of the *Daily News*, to sacrifice all, the Bill must pass as payment of a debt by the Government to its teetotal masters. Well, Sir, is the Government prepared to sacrifice one of its most brilliant Ministers? Old-age pensions, land and housing and taxation reform, may all go, seats may be lost, but you will have your Bill—you who a year ago said the will of the people must prevail. It sounds an anomaly, but the House of Lords must see that it does—and by rejecting this Bill, as I for one sincerely hope they will, they will place you in the humiliating position of having to bury it side by side with your three still-born education offspring. Or else you will have to go back to the country with the knowledge that in the space of three short years you have dissipated the greatest power ever placed in the hands of a political Party, and instead of indellibly impressing upon the early annals of this century the record of a great achievement you will have thrown your golden opportunities to the winds, and have shattered once more the long-delayed hopes of a too-confiding people.

*MR. CROOKS (Woolwich): The speech to which we have just listened was marvellously clever, but it was as cold-blooded as any I have ever heard. The hon. Member began by deriding the Ministerial Party for claiming the sympathy for this Bill of the Bishops, whom he has frequently calumniated, while he himself claimed the support of the Lords whom he is always denouncing. That is one of the things that makes one doubt the sincerity of the hon. Gentleman.

MR. BOTTOMLEY was understood to ask the hon. Gentleman to apologise for challenging his sincerity.

*MR. CROOKS: Apologise! Why should I apologise? One did expect from so eminent a person some better argument than the mere shilly-shallying back-biting which led to laughter. Anyone can do that quite easily and waste the time of the House of Commons for an hour or two. We are face to face with a problem which is far more difficult than the hon. Member seems to suppose. He says that the nation is not behind us. I say that the nation is behind us. I only value the honour of a seat in the House of Commons in proportion to the opportunities it gives me of voicing the opinion of the people outside. A seat here has no other honour and glory to me except to be useful to the cause of the people. The hon. Member talks about representing the working-man and asks for evidence of their drunkenness, and he goes to the Courts for proof of it. Well, he may have an intimate knowledge of Courts, but I have an intimate knowledge of the courts and alleys of the East End in which the people dwell, and I look upon the hon. Member's statements with indifference. I well remember when the Act of 1904 was being forced through the House. I was one of the humble individuals who lost their heads over the iniquity of that Bill. I was foolish enough to defy the Chair and decline to vote, when the Speaker with that kindliness of heart so characteristic of him pointed out to me that I was not helping myself or my cause but insulting him. I then went into the lobby and said that the then Government were forcing their Bill through the House to create freeholds for the brewers. It was not a publicans' Bill but a brewers' Bill and it was robbing the publicans. The hon. Member for Spen Valley fully pointed out also that the publicans had rights, that the licences had been given to them, but that Parliament was doing nothing for them though it had given them a right to do certain things in certain places. Will hon. Gentlemen deny that the people of the country have a right to interfere with that right which they have given for nothing? When a company obtains a franchise for laying down tramways it is well known that in every Act there is provision that at the end of twenty-one years they are bound to sell it to the local authority for its mere value as it stands and that nothing is paid for goodwill. What is good enough for tramways should be good enough for public-house licences. The brewers bought the public-houses at boom prices—they were tumbling over one another to get premises in which they could compel people to take their stuff—some of it good and some bad. I have seen a man drinking a pot of sour beer and smacking his lips after with the remark, "Ah! there ain't no bad beer." I am going to give a few humble facts. I can assure the House that the brewers paid an abnormal price for many of these houses and then manipulated the books in order to keep down the local rates they would have to pay. I know of a free-house which cost £19,000.

MR. BOTTOMLEY: Will the hon. Member give the name and locality of the house?

*MR. CROOKS: I have neither the legal nor the financial training of the hon. Member, but I will give the name of the brewers, and of the house for which they paid £19,000. The brewers then came up to the Assessment Committee with two documents and said, "This house is let on a lease; it cost £7,000." But said the Committee, "You gave £19,000 for it." "Oh yes; that was so, but there is £11,000 for goodwill, and you cannot assess the goodwill," and then they brought another set of books. I said, "Of course, this is all very well, but who had £11,000 for the goodwill"? "Oh," they said, "the tenant who has gone out." I said, "May we have him present as a witness." They replied, "He has gone away, and we don't know where to find him." I said, "I will give you his address if you like," and the fact is the man had not 11,000 farthings. That is the way in which they get round the Assessment Committee when they want to pay less rates, but they add on the goodwill when they want compensation. I know a case where a poor man, a publican, gave £600 for the four years lease of a public-house, and the brewers who were the owners of the property said to him, "Now you must take up a twenty-one years lease." The man said, "I cannot very well, I have not the money." They said, "Look here, we will give you a twenty-one years lease of this house, and you pay us a premium of £2,000; at least you don't pay it to us you owe it to us." So it was put down on paper that he owed them £2,000 for a twenty-one years lease. Well, they robbed him of his £600 by bringing all the forces of law to bear upon the poor man. These people who are screaming out about confiscation have robbed more men and widows than ever the temperance party has done. I remember a case of a widow who had a "tied" house. She was in the habit of taking her strong ales from a Burton firm, but the London firm took to brewing their own Burton, and as she was "tied" to them they sent it to her. She had the courage to say she would not have it. They said, "You will take it or get out of the house." Ultimately she had to go on her knees to the manager to be allowed to earn her daily bread, but he said, "The house is let, you must get out." Can they bring such a charge against the temperance party? Take another case: a man goes to a firm and wants a public-house. He has saved £400. They say, "That is a ridiculous amount, but as you are a respectable man we may come to terms. What do you want?" He says, "I thought the 'Pig and Lion' was going," and, that being so, the poor man pays his money down to find out afterwards that he has been robbed by way of an imaginary loan to him of £5,000 at 5 per cent., although the rent is comparatively low. Of course, he goes in; he has no previous experience of such things, but he thinks it is Paradise to get a public-house, but in the end he finds out that he has got to the other shop. At the end of a few months he appeals to the Assessment Committee and says, "I cannot pay the amount." "Why," you ask, "what is the value of the house, what will it fetch?" Then you get to the bewildering mysteries in connection with the hypothetical tenant. They ask, "What did you pay?" and he says "£300; but it is the loan that is killing me, and the brewers say if I do not pay up I shall have to get out." Will hon. Members who know something about brewery shares tell me how it was that when "the boom" went down they never attempted to reduce the loan to the publican, but they said "We must keep the loan up, but we will take 2 per cent. or 1 per cent. interest on the capital amount remaining." That must be shown to the shareholders to demonstrate the value of the property, and therefore it is idle when we say "Why don't you go to the brewers and get a reduction of the loan." The result is that in the end the tenant has to go out and another poor wretch has to go in, and that is how the people act you are asking us to have sympathy and pity for to-day. How do they act to others? The fact is that this sort of thing has gone too far. And when they talk about putting people out of employment, what is their record about putting men out of work? I say nothing about making them physical wrecks and putting them out of public-houses. To hear them argue about barmaids one would think they would rush off with their own daughters to get them a job in a public-house. It is said that the presence of barmaids has a refining influence upon the men, but I have seen the opposite when two fellows are quarrelling over the girls. Here in London is a brewery site for sale. That brewery site was bought because an Act of Parliament compelled the London County Council to re-house certain people who had been thrown out of their houses by the Strand improvement. No less a sum than £200,000 was paid to that brewery for that site. The real value was £45,000. As soon as they got the £200,000 of course they looked after the men who were working for them because they are so anxious about the unemployed? No, they did not; they transferred their business to another firm. They went on selling just the same, but they did not increase the staff of the brewery which was doing two breweries' work. Whenever they are concentrating their efforts they pursue that policy. I will tell a story which I have told before about these wonderful people we are asked to pity. When they go to new licensing justices, they invariably play this game and play it very successfully. They say "We are prepared to surrender three licences if you will give us one other." I know cases where the brewers paid 10s. or 15s. a week to the caretakers who live in three houses, the "Waterman's Arms," the "Noah's Ark," and the "Black Horse." On these three licences they lost from £75 to £80 a year to keep them alive, and they went to the Middlesex justices, and said, "In the interests of temperance and the morality of this particular district we are prepared to surrender these three licences," and the licensing justices, sweet innocent men that they are, said "Here is a sacrifice," and they gave the brewers a blazing gin palace at the corner of a street in place of them. The persons who were turned out of these three houses got nothing at all. Not a bit of it. There was moreover a case in which compensation to the extent of £6,150 was paid, but the licence holder only got £100. And they say they are looking after the licence holder all the time. Do not you believe it. When in 1904 we moved from these benches an Amendment that the licence holder should have the first claim upon the compensation, and I said that if the Bill was to be a temperance Bill it would not back up the brewers, they did not cheer, but they smiled, and when I asked a question about it the Solicitor-General said they were not arguing the point. As to clubs I want the club to be a useful place and not a place for drunkenness and debauchery. Why jeer us about that? An hon. Member who has left the House may be reminded that in his own division there is a great political club, and I have known a brilliant politician to be addressing a public meeting in that club, and while the bars were well filled, the audience consisted of twelve. If these men believe in their own clubs they will back this Government up and get this Bill through, and suppress with an iron hand any bogus clubs which may spring up in our midst. We are told that if we pass this Bill we shall never come back. What of it? It will be a glorious memory if we try to do something while we are here towards preventing drunkenness. There has been enough swindling over these loans, and it is time it was ended. I know another house near the place where I live which has always been a disreputable house. It has ruined about six men who put their money into it, and the last man had to keep it open. It was shut up the other day and they got £2,000 for it, someone having told some more lies about it. Now the building is let as a clothing factory. What the House does not seem to understand is this: that if you put licensed premises in a given district you deteriorate the whole of the district. Take the Earl of Sefton. I am told that he owns a considerable part of Liverpool. He would not be a teetotaller, but he finds it more profitable not to have licensed houses on his property and will not have them. I am told that the Peckham election was not won by beer but by coals, but they boasted that they had won it, and if they call that a victory let them. Let them have all the victories they like at that price. I want to ask the House whether it feels that it has any obligation to discharge for the morality and well-being not of the voters but those humble people who live in our courts and alleys, and who are not qualified to get on to the voters' lists. We are often asked, "What do the voters say?" But who helps these poor people who have no votes? Whenever a public-house is put down in a working-class neighbourhood, it is argued that it is not fair to make a man go a mile or two to the next house for his drink. Mr. Speaker, they are not worried about the man going another mile, it is his twopence that they are after. They think that if he had to go another mile he would go without his beer—that he would give it up. Wise man. The hon. Member who has just addressed the House said that the Child Messenger Bill had caused much drunkenness amongst women. Are the little children now to be dragged in so that they may sip from mother's bottle and mother's jug going home. There are two public-houses near where I live. I know of one where there is a lot of drunkenness, but nobody is ever locked up because they manage to prop each other up until they get home; but there is nothing against that house, because nobody is charged with drunkenness. There is another house near a marketing place, and in the morning the doors stand wide open and women go in, sometimes, perhaps, with the potatoes which they have bought in their aprons, and the publican lends them a knife in order that they may peel their potatoes while having their drink, so that they may stop a little longer. This they say is a question of the freedom of the subject. We are told you are interfering with the liberty of Englishmen, and now little children are to have no right to be protected. You are creating more drunkenness amongst women. To-day, as every day, we listen to the Lord's Prayer in this House. Think of it; while we here are praying, "Lead us not into temptation," we are leaving the temptation to our weaker brothers and sisters who are not able to withstand it. Think of the thousands of little children living their lives under conditions in which you would not keep your dogs, and simply because of the viciousness of their mothers and fathers. You men, who sit in this House and know the average workmen and his capacity and temptation, think what it means, and as it is given to you, so you must use your power to prevent temptation falling in the way of your weaker brothers and sisters, and save the little children. I know some rotten fœtid slums which it is a wonder are allowed to remain by the sanitary inspector, and which are absolutely unfit for people to live in; but so long as these people can get at the drink and get chloroformed for the night, they do not care under what conditions they live. So many of the social evils which this country has to face would vanish into thin air to-morrow if we were a sober nation. We are asked, Why do we want to close the public-houses on polling day? Well, we want to close them on polling day because we want to get level with the rich man. We cannot. We want to get men sober on polling day. We want to get them to vote with a sober mind. We want to prevent a man going into a public-house, putting down sixpence, and getting a pint of beer and change for a half-crown. There are incidents of that character in all elections, and the candidate, to whom I give every credit, knows nothing about it, because it is included sometimes in what is known as "personal expenses," of which it is no use asking for details, because they cannot be given. But if these houses were shut up on polling days you would have several hundreds of committee rooms doing nothing. I am not blaming either Party for doing all this, but we all know that the rich man or his agents will do it, and we want to remove them from the temptation. There is something to be said for municipal control as well as municipal supply, but I am one of those who think it is just as bad to get municipally drunk as drunk with private enterprise. But if we had municipal control we should shut up on polling days nearly 400 of these committee rooms in every district in the country. When a trade says "Our trade is our politics," then you have a committee room at once in every public-house in the country. People say to me, "I love your Bill, but I am going to vote against you," and I say "That is right, my friend, do not put up a bill in your windows, I shall lose two votes on the other side if you do." We want this Bill. It is an earnest contribution to the solution of a difficult problem. Of course there is a good deal of noise and enthusiasm against the Bill. I do not deny it. But when I think of the many pressing things we need upon which you cannot get up any enthusiasm, when I think of the need of better housing in the country, and the need for organising the unemployed, then I come back to the fact that because you can chloroform men day by day with drink they care not for the conditions under which they live. I hope we are going to strengthen this Bill and to give to all respectable clubs inspection. We do not always like to have the policeman as an inspector. He is a decent, respectable chap, no doubt, but whenever he retires from the force the publican always heads a subscription list to give him a testimonial, and that seems to create a bias in our minds somehow; so we do not want a policeman to be the inspector, but supervision there must be, because we cannot have these boozing clubs about the country. It is no use saying to me the thing does not exist, because it does. I am a teetotaller myself, but I was taken into a club the other day, and when I saw what was going on I came out. A man who was coming out behind me said, "This is all right, ain't it?" I said "What is the matter with it?" and he said, "Look what is going on, and I am a Tory, I am." I said "Then what do you belong to it for?" and he said, "Because I can get a drink of a Sunday morning, what oh!" They give them all respectable names. I can imagine "The Sir Gilbert Parker Institute and Club"—anything to give it a tone or air of respectability. I want the Bill amended. We have got to give the people less facilities for drink. The man out of work will frequently have a drink given to him long before he gets twopence to get a bit of bread and cheese. The whole of our public system seems to be permeated with drink, drink, drink. If you make a bargain, "Come and have a drink." If you sustain a loss, "Come and have a drink." If you fall out with a man, the first thing you do when you are reconciled to him is to have a drink. When I look at our lunatic asylums, when I look at our workhouses, where all the manhood has been crushed out of our citizens, when we want strong men and strong women to fight the battles of the future—then I say we want a strong Bill. The abolition of the public-houses in the working-class neighbourhoods would do that. I know what the life of some working-men is. Yet you wonder he does not live a better life. Give him a chance and remove the temptation from him. Remember, it was Cain who said "Am I my brother's keeper?" The House has been very kind to listen to me. I have not gone into the abstract questions of finance. They are not my *forte*. I know little of finance except the need of it. But the House must know this: tied houses have led to more drunkenness than any other conditions. When the right hon. Member for East Worcestershire gave us that little homily about the sobriety of the people of Germany, and said that they did not get drunk, the hon. Member for Haggerston said they could not. Yes, I knew a poor woman who followed her husband into a public-house down our way, and who said to those behind the bar, "Don't you keep my husband here drinking and making him drunk." "Lord bless you, mum," they replied, "he won't get drunk here; he may burst." If the Excise man had been there, there would have been some trouble. Do you doubt that some of these poor men have been robbed of the money which they have put into the public-houses? It was my duty to take the head out of a puncheon one day. In that puncheon I found a lady's pink silk stocking half full of tobacco. I suppose that was to give it a flavour. I looked at the district from which it came. I found it was a densely populated poor neighbourhood. Why adulterate it? They get drunk all the quicker. Yes, indeed there is need for this Bill. There is need to give the publican a little more freedom and to make him less the slave of the brewer than he has been. The brewer has been a bad master except in one or two cases where he has lived up to his obligations. You ask me to pity him when he has been so remorseless to people for whom he is responsible. I say "No, even handed justice if you like; no favouritism anywhere." In the interests of the poorest of the poor and that they may have an opportunity to live sober, clean lives, I ask the House and the Government to force this Bill through, though we may lose every seat we hold. The Labour Party are prepared to do it, any how, if we never see the inside of this House again.

*MR. ASHLEY (Lancashire, Blackpool): I should not have presumed to intervene in this debate, because there are many Members who understand the intricacies of the question better than I do, if I did not wish briefly to bring before the notice of the House the case of those who will be deprived of their employment under this Bill. I refer to the women who will be turned out of their employment under Clause 20. Perhaps hon. Members imagine that the only people who can be turned out of their employment under the Bill are the barmaids. Even if that were so, I should not hesitate to raise my voice in protest against this measure, because there has not been put forward a tittle of evidence to prove that this honest, hard-working class of women deserve to be turned out into the street to starve or to take refuge in something still worse. There are at the present time 96,000 licensed holders in England and Wales, and it is computed—and I think it is a fair and modest computation—that not less than from 80,000 to 100,000 women are employed in and about those portions of licensed houses where liquor is sold. Nay, more; it applies to other large numbers of people, because the Bill says "any women employed on licensed premises." Not only does it give power to the licensing justices to prevent any women being employed in the bar of a public-house, but to prevent any woman acting as a cashier, as a clerk, as a waitress, and indeed as a chambermaid in any of our big hotels. I cannot imagine that this House fully realises what a gross injustice may be done to women, especially when we consider that women have no constitutional means in our political system of expressing their opinion with reference to this measure. What precedents are there for the House of Parliament interfering with the freedom of contract and labour of grown-up women? There are only two; one affected a very small class and was the case of women who are not allowed to take part in certain processes of white lead manufacture, which are undoubtedly dangerous and injurious to health. The other case in which large numbers of women were affected was that of the Mines and Collieries Act of 1842. It was brought in at the instance of my grandfather, Lord Ashley. There can be no possible analogy between the two cases. If hon. Members will read the debates in the House in 1842 they will see that the women were treated more like brute beasts than human beings. They worked practically naked, dragging heavy weights in mines where the police could not penetrate; and the Legislature rightly said that women and children must not be employed in them. These are the only two; precedents that can be quoted in support of this clause that women shall not be employed in licensed premises. What are the arguments brought forward in support of the Government's proposal? It is very hard to find any arguments. I have read very carefully the only book available which has been published by those who wish to carry out this prohibition; and, although there are many insinuations and suggestions that there are other employments preferable, yet there are no facts adduced which would induce this House to prevent women engaging if they so wish in this, what I call, lawful and honest occupation. On what grounds can we justify interference? We can intervene on moral and physical grounds. Let me take the physical ground. It is said that women engaged in licensed houses stand undue hours. I think that may be so and possibly legislation is needed. It is said that the atmosphere is not conducive to good health. Whose fault is that? Surely that is the fault of the licensing justices, whose duty it is to see that every house before it is licensed is in a sanitary and proper state. Do the Government in bringing forward this clause take the moral ground? If they do, let them come out into the open and state what they know against the moral character of the women employed in licensed houses. Do not let us have insinuations without facts. Let us have some proof that this large and hard-working class, numbering from 150,000 to 200,000 women, are any less moral than the women employed in the factories or the large shops. What is the Government's attitude? I think the attitude taken up by the Home Secretary is really the strongest argument that I can adduce why the House should not pass the Second Reading of this Bill to-night without knowing what it is doing with reference to the employment of women. A deputation of barmaids interviewed the Home Secretary a month or two ago and expressed their views through the secretary of their union. What did the Home Secretary say in answer to these ladies? He said—

> "I feel there would be a hardship if a licensing authority were to order in some big town that no barmaids were to be employed, but I think no licensing authority will, in fact, do that, but there is nothing in the Bill to prevent it."

That is a most extraordinary attitude to take up. The right hon. Gentleman says there would be a great hardship if this clause were put in operation, but he hopes no licensing authority would do so, and he keeps it in the Bill. If that is the only argument you can bring forward in support of this most unjust proposal, then we ought not to pass the Second Reading of the Bill without having some statement from the right hon. Gentleman as to what the attitude of the Government is going to be. Why have these proposals really been put forward? There is on the part of many hon. Members in this House a curious and unreasoning hatred of anything to do with the licensing trade. They wish to strike at that trade in any way they can, and they know that by preventing the employment of women in licensed houses they will deal a blow at it. There are large bodies of people in this country who are extremely jealous of the introduction of female labour in competition with male labour. They wish to prevent women raising themselves in the social state, and getting into the skilled trades; and this is an attempt to replace female by male labour. It may be said, as the Home Secretary has said, that no bench of licensing justices will ever prevent women from gaining an honest livelihood in this way, but such a thing has been done in the past. It seems an extraordinary thing that no Minister is present while a very important measure is being discussed. The Glasgow magistrates issued an edict, which was withdrawn as it was beyond their powers, that no single woman should be employed in the bars of the public-houses in that city. That shows what will happen if you give power to those people who may have no knowledge of the circumstances of the trade, and if you pass the Bill with these clauses in it you will do it with your eyes open as to what the effects may be. But there has been some weakening in the attitude of the Government in reference to this measure, because the Under-Secretary for the Home Department stated that those at present employed in this industry would be allowed a certificate, and might continue to work in licensed premises as long as they wished. That is to say, these women are to be treated in the same way as the Chinese coolie who goes out of his compound in the afternoon. Really I think this is adding insult to injury. I would tell the right hon. Gentleman if he were present, and I speak for these women, that they will accept no compromise in this matter. What they claim is, and I most strongly support them, to have a free and unfettered right to gain their livelihood, if they so wish, on licensed premises which have been hall-marked by the licensing justices as being respectable. These same licensing justices are to have the power to prevent these women working on these premises, having themselves issued a licence to say that the house is respectable. If the house is respectable you have no right to prevent grown up women being employed there. If it is not respectable it ought not to be licensed.

Mr. MACLEAN (Bath): The whole incidence of this clause will apply to future employment and new women who are brought into the trade.

*Mr. ASHLEY: My point is that the hardship the women complain of is that you are going permanently to take away 200,000 situations from women and hand them over to men.

Mr. MACLEAN: What women are making this outcry? The employment of existing women on licensed premises is going to be secured to them. Those to whom the hon. Member is referring must be future aspirants of whom he cannot possibly have any knowledge. Passing from that, which is purely a Committee point, to one or two of the main provisions which have been disputed in regard to this measure, one idea that has come from the benches opposite is that the Bill proposes to inflict hardships upon certain individuals in the community. The case which has been presented from this side of the House and from the Labour Benches is that while some hardships will be inflicted on certain individuals in the community, this measure stands for the good of the community as a whole. No answer has yet been given in any clear and definite terms to the question asked by the Prime Minister as to the attitude of the Party opposite with regard to the time-limit. There has been more or less an idea put forward that they are not altogether opposed to it, but the position that has been taken up clearly and definitely shows that their claim is a freehold claim and nothing less, because they require that such compensation as is paid shall be, not in regard to mere monopoly value, but for the whole undertaking of the licence holder and the brewery in connection with these premises. That position I suggest is absolutely untenable from the legal and from the equitable point of view. What is the idea which has always underlain a licence? The hon. Member for the Walton division would put a licence in the same position as a share in a railway company. That cannot be supported. The idea that lies at the basis of a licence is not property but protection for the public. That has been so from the earliest time. The first power which was given in 1495 was to suppress a licence. The way they used to suppress it in those days was that if anybody made a complaint the local justices ordered the constable to take down the sign and that was an end of the particular business. In the records of Derbyshire a gentleman occupying a very superior position in the county at that time, Sir Nathaniel Curzon, made such a complaint to the local justice, and there is a record that in accordance with his complaint the sign was taken down. In 1618 this method of dealing with the local supply and demand was found rather inconvenient, and so they established a yearly session by which these things should be dealt with, and from that time right up to the Act which was the foundation of the whole of our licensing system, the Act of 1828, the same idea has been preserved carefully, the idea that the basis of the licence is protection of the public and not the giving of any property to the man who has the licence. That position was, as has been most clearly stated, thoroughly upheld by all legal decisions which have been given with regard to this disputed point. The hon. Member for the Walton Division yesterday made some reference to the remarks of Lord Halsbury in the decision of Sharpe *v.* Wakefield and said he had qualified his use of the word "judicial." Such qualification as he mentions is most clearly set out in a subsequent case which he dealt with —the Boulter decision. The action of the justices when the Bill becomes law, as I certainly believe it will, will be in no sense other than judical in the full sense and meaning of Lord Halsbury when he dealt with it in that case. Three clear principles come out in all the study one makes of our licensing system. Protection of the public against national danger is the first point. The suggestion has been made from the front bench opposite, not by an irresponsible back bencher like myself on this side, that this measure contains frank recognition of the most vilely Socialistic propositions. I do not think anybody would dare to charge the supreme Federal Court in America with any leanings towards Socialism. That is a Court which has ejected the proposition of an income-tax as being against the Constitution of America. The 14th clause of the American Constitution reads as follows:—

> "No State shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States, nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty, or property without due process of law, nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of its laws."

On that clause in the Constitution the action of the various States who have suppressed licences without any compensation was directly challenged. What was the decision of the Court? It was of course that when you take away private property so-called you must give adequate compensation. When you take away an unnecessary licence you do not take away private property, you abate a nuisance, and when you abate a nuisance no compensation under any existing system of laws with which I have even a nodding acquaintance gives any compensation. That is the basis on which this very high Court, composed of the most eminent legal intellects, has dealt with this question. I really think the suggestion as to the Socialistic propaganda that lies beneath the Bill can be easily and most readily disposed of. It is suggested with regard to reduction of licences that it does not mean any reduction of drinking or drunkenness. Experience is directly and definitely opposed to that proposition. Take the case of Liverpool. In Liverpool, owing largely, I do not say entirely, to the action of magistrates, not only in the reduction of redundant licences, but also in more effective police supervision, they have been able in recent years to reduce the police force at a saving of £8,000 a year. Mr. Arthur Chamberlain, whom one recognises as an expert on this question in the very best sense, said—

> "Taking the area which had been cleared of unnecessary licences there has been an improvement of no less than 37 per cent. in the number of arrests for drunkenness."

The Chief Constable of Cardiff, with which city I have a very close and intimate acquaintance, said—

> "An excessive number of public-houses in any district makes it almost impossible for holders of licenses to live. Some of them told me if they were to exclude loose women they could not pay their pay. The excessive number of licenses in certain districts should be reduced to the reasonable requirements of the neighbourhood. This would first reduce the temptation to drinking, raise the *status* of the licensed houses, and be the means of suppressing crime."

I am very much surprised to hear the point seriously pressed that a reasonable reduction of licences does not really reduce drunkenness and conduce eminently to the regulation of public order. We hear a great deal about investments in brewery securities, but who is it that has invested in those funds? If any trustee has invested in such securities on behalf of widows and orphans, he has, unless express directions have been given him, committed a gross breach of trust. Therefore, it is an argument which has been very largely exploded. I do not say that investors will not be to a large extent hit by this Bill, but it is impossible to deal with an individual interest for the good of the community as a whole without hurting somebody. [OPPOSITION cries of "Why?"] Because you cannot carry on the business of the country and compensate every interest you come into contact with. Somebody is hit as the result of every piece of legislation adopted by this House. The limited interests affected by this Bill will certainly bear a very small proportion to the hardships which are inflicted upon individual interests by many other measures passed through this House. The question of unemployment has already been amply dealt with. With regard to the financial proposals, I feel sure that all sections of the House will agree that the statesmanlike and magnificent speech made by the hon. Member for Spen Valley is more than an ample answer to the able and clear statement put before the House by the hon. and learned Member for Kingston. I am satisfied to rest the financial case for this Bill upon the speech of the hon. Member for Spen Valley, and when the public judge between the two interesting speeches to which I have alluded I am confident they will say that the balance of advantage lies with the speech of the hon. Member for Spen Valley. With regard to the argument that this Bill does not make for temperance, I will call attention to what is done by Clause 20 in respect to restoring the power of the justices. Since the passing of the Act of 1904 the justices have been hampered and restricted in all sorts of ways in regard to any proper control of the licensee, and under this Bill that is to be altered. One other useful proposition is that there is to be a check on new licenses and the evils resulting from the present position of affairs. I know of a town where the population has increased by 35,000 during the past fifteen years. Street after street has been erected, and the workmen have invested their small savings in dwelling houses. This new district is the happy hunting ground of seekers for licenses, applied for mostly by the agents of brewery companies. I know applications which have been made year after year for the last ten years, and the workmen living in that district have been frequently driven into Court in order to defend their rights and oppose the granting of those licenses, and so far, I am glad to say, they have been successful. I may mention that in some of the new leases granted in that district a clause was inserted that the holders of those leases should undertake not to oppose the granting of licenses. To my mind that is a most disgraceful proceeding, because workmen have the right to keep their homes clear of the inconvenience of the public-house being open next door. Then there is Clause 19, which deals with young children going into public-houses. I think that clause is far too weak, and it ought to be made compulsory upon all magistrates to prevent children under fourteen years of age from frequenting the open bars of licensed premises. I think in saying that I carry with me the vast majority of hon. Members of this House, for this is a matter upon which the nation has made up its mind. The nation is not any longer going to allow young children to frequent the open bars of licensed premises. There are certain propositions contained in the Bill which, in my opinion, are of a very mild description with regard to Sunday closing. The hon. Member for South Hackney referred to the failure of Sunday closing in Scotland, Ireland, and Wales. I wish to say that Sunday closing in those places has been a pronounced and emphatic success, and the balance of advantage is enormously on the side of the measures now in force there. If any hon. Member cares to appeal to the licensed trade of Scotland I am sure he will get an emphatic reply in favour of the retention of the measure as it at present stands. The recent Royal Commission had evidence given by licensees upon this question, and although one of them stated that he was in favour of some modification of the Scottish Sunday Closing Act he said he was speaking entirely for himself and that he believed the vast majority of the licensed trade in Scotland was in favour of entire Sunday closing. The same thing applies to Wales, and its undoubted success in Ireland is also embodied in the recent Report which has been presented to the House. One the greatest reasons for passing this measure into law is that it will do away with the social and political menace of the licensed trade. What is their declared position towards this House? The object of their main organisations is to secure by legal means, regardless of party politics, the return to the House of Commons of candidates favourable to trade interests. The Licensed Victuallers Central Protection Society has for its object the securing of such Parliamentary, municipal, and parochial representation as is necessary for the protection of its interests. At the end of the time-limit when the trade is lifted out of its present ruts and raised to the broad and sound national control the country as a whole will be all the better for it, and there will be a proper and reasonable adjustment of a reasonable supply to a reasonable demand. No doubt we shall, as a Party, lose seats in the contest upon which we have entered, but I do not think anyone will charge us with lack of courage. There is such a thing as the wastage of war in a campaign carried on for the upraising of the whole people. If some of us lose our seats, if our majorities are materially reduced, if at the end we have achieved a great work for the country and for the citizens, I am sure we shall have achieved the result we had in view.

Mr. CHAPLIN (Surrey, Wimbledon): We have had an interesting debate, but it is unfortunate that we have been left without a Minister on the front bench opposite during a great part of the discussion. It is a new feature of a debate on the principal Bill of the session that the Minister in charge of it should have been absent all day. There have been remarkable differences of opinion between two of the Ministers with regard to some of the provisions and some of the effects of this measure, and there is a wide divergence of opinion among hon. Members opposite. As the real effects of the Bill become better known in this House that divergence of opinion is likely to increase. The hon. Gentleman who has just spoken is under a misapprehension when he says that my right hon. friend the Member for South Dublin has not explained the policy of the Opposition in regard to the time-limit. My right hon. friend has explained that the Leader of the Opposition declared in 1904 that, in his opinion, a time-limit is absolutely inconsistent with a levy on the trade. The hon. Member complained—I do not know to what districts he was referring—that working men were subjected in some parts of the country to great hardships because they were compelled to sign leases by which they undertook not to oppose the granting of a new licence, or the renewal of an existing licence, if I understood him aright. I have always recognised this myself, and I have considerable sympathy with the view of the hon. Member. On the other hand it is perfectly easy for a man in a wealthy position to take measures to ensure that he shall not be subjected to the nuisance of having a public-house in his neighbourhood. It ought to be possible for working men to occupy a similarly favourable position. I agree that that is a hardship, but it is one which can be remedied whenever Parliament thinks fit to undertake the work, without the introduction of a sweeping measure like this which, in that particular respect, as far as I can see, would not place them in a better position than they are in at the present moment.

I pass to what I desire to say with regard to some of the statements of the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House. At the commencement of this debate he referred again to what he described as the fundamental objects of the Bill which he has now put before the House and the country on three different occasions. The first was on the introduction of this Bill just about two months ago; the second was at a banquet given in London on 1st April last; and the third was on the opening of this debate. On the introduction of this Bill the right hon. Gentleman said that its first great object was an immediate and progressive reduction of the facilities for drinking in this country. On Tuesday last he said that it was to improve, by reduction of licences and other means, the conditions under which the liquor traffic is carried on; but at the banquet on 1st April it was no longer to be an immediate reduction. Then it was to be a reduction in a reasonable time, and I was pleased to think that there was some modification already in his opinions. I began to entertain very considerable hopes that he was going to meet the Opposition in regard to this Bill in a fair and conciliatory spirit. I am bound to say that, as far as I am concerned, if a reasonable reduction of licences in a reasonable time was all the Bill provided, I do not think I should have any great quarrel with the Prime Minister. I hope hon. Members opposite will forgive me for saying this, but they always seem to me from their speeches, at least, to give the impression that they claim to have a monopoly in the Radical Party of the desire to promote temperance and to diminish drunkenness in this country. If that is the view which they entertain, I can assure them that they are entirely mistaken. We have differed no doubt, and differed very widely indeed, as to the methods by which they propose to accomplish that end. It is permitted to us so to differ, but we are no less anxious than they are to see the promotion of temperance and the diminution of drunkenness largely carried out in this country, and it is because I entertain those opinions myself, as strongly, I dare say, as any man in this House, that it was with proportionate disappointment I heard the right hon. Gentleman, when he came to the close of his speech, which my hon. and learned friend who moved the Amendment described as a wild whirligig of words, make what seemed to me, I confess, was like an open declara- of war on the opponents of this measure.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE, Carnarvon Boroughs): A challenge to war.

MR. CHAPLIN: No, I think it was a declaration of war, but we must all form our own opinions as to that. In view of the fact that my hon. and learned friend who moved the Amendment dissected the Bill with so much completeness and skill that left nothing to be desired, and very little more to be said, I propose in the few observations I desire to address to the House to-night to confine myself entirely to stating the general objections on which I am wholly opposed to your Bill in the form in which it is before us at present. My first and main objection is this, that you cannot get away from the fact that the Bill deprives a vast number of the people of this country of properties or possessions, or by whatever name you may be pleased to call them, to which they have a right now, and that it does this, moreover, without making them that fair compensation to which, in my opinion, they have a perfectly equitable claim. But the Prime Minister met this by saying that the Bill does no legal wrong, and, what is more, that those who object to it have no legal claim, and will have no right or title to claim a renewal of a licence which may or may not be affected by this Bill. It is not for me to argue with the right hon. Gentleman on ground like that, but I heard all that was said by my hon. friend, and I think he gave very good reasons which at least may cause some doubts as to whether the Prime Minister is absolutely right in law. I think the question when we get into Committee will be more thoroughly thrashed out. But to-night I am not concerned to go into that, and with all respect in the world to the Prime Minister I say that that is not the question which is at issue at present between us. What we have to decide in the first place, in my opinion, in connection with this Bill in this: Have they or have they not an equitable title to the undisturbed enjoyment of their possessions? If the answer to that question is in the affirmative, then the next question we have to decide is: Do they get under your Bill that fair and full compensation to which, as I contend myself, they are entitled, and which Parliament up to the present time, at all events, has always awarded to those who are deprived of their property for any great national purpose? As a matter of fact those are the two main questions which possess an interest for me in connection with this Bill, and upon which the fight will have to be fought out. The answer to the first question, in my opinion, is and must be in the affirmative, and it is supported by a number of witnesses of great weight and authority whose opinions I will quote directly. As to the second question, for the answer to that you have only to glance at the figures given to the House on the opening night of the debate by my hon. and learned friend, which no one in any part of the House has ever attempted to answer, and which I venture to say will never be answered throughout the whole of this debate. Then the Prime Minister says: "That is all very well, but what you call a title, what you call a claim, is what I call an expectation"—an expectation, moreover, as my right hon. friend pointed out this afternoon, which the Prime Minister declared is not and never can be called any form of property whatever. It is upon this point that I am going to call one or two witnesses against him, and the first shall be one of greater authority, as I am sure he himself will be the first to admit, than the right hon. Gentleman the present Leader of the House, because it is the authority of a man who was the cherished Leader and idol of the Liberal Party for a vast number of years, namely, the late Mr. Gladstone I remember the statement which he made, a great many years ago it is true, but that does not diminish its value in the slightest degree, because it was on a matter of great principle, and principles hold good throughout any length of time. I am sure that hon. Members on both sides of the House will receive his opinions, although they may be distasteful, with all the respect to which his memory entitles him. In the Midlothian campaign, speaking at Dalkeith, on 26th November, 1879, Mr. Gladstone said—

> "I have promised, gentlemen, to say a word during this course of addresses on a subject of very great importance—namely, the subject of the liquor laws of this country. . . . . Everyone admits the seriousness of the case. But we come to great differences of opinion as to the mode of dealing with it."

That is an experience which the present Ministers must admit.

> "My opinion is this, that the three principles which ought to guide the consideration of this difficult question are as follows: (1) Serious efforts ought to be made to abate this terrible mischief."

We all agree with that.

> "(2) They should be made with a due and a careful regard for the state of public opinion."

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: Hear, hear!

MR. CHAPLIN: The right hon. Gentleman says "Hear, hear." I am inclined to observe from some recent manifestations that the Government in introducing this Bill have not had quite due regard to all classes of public opinion.

> "(3) I must also add that I think that if it be necessary, if Parliament shall think it wise to introduce radical change into the working of the liquor law in such a way as to break down the fair expectations of persons which have grown up—whether rightly or wrongly is not the question, it is not their fault, it is our fault—under the shadow of these laws, their fair claim to compensation ought, if they can make good their case, to be considered, as all such claims have been considered, by the wisdom and the liberality of the British Parliament."

In the following year Mr. Gladstone returned to the charge. In the House of Commons on 18th June, 1880, Mr. Gladstone, who was then Prime Minister, in the course of a debate on a Resolution proposed by Sir Wilfred Lawson, said—

> "I should have been better pleased with the matter of the resolution if my hon. friend (Sir Wilfrid Lawson) had included in it some reference to the principle of equitable compensation. I do not want my hon. friend to commit himself upon the point, but I want a frank recognition

> of the principle that we are not to deny to publicans, as a class, the benefits of equal treatment, because we think their trade is at so many points in contact with, and even sometimes productive of, great public mischief."

I beg the attention of the House to the following words, because the expression is very remarkable.

> "Considering the legislative title they have acquired"—

I am not lawyer enough to be able to draw a distinction between a statutory and a legislative title. I should say it is a distinction without a difference; but that is a point which will have to be settled by the present Prime Minister who denies altogether that there is a legal title to renewal—

> "Considering the *legislative* title they have acquired, and the recognition of their position in the proceedings of this House for a long series of years, they ought not to be placed at a disadvantage on account of the particular impression we may entertain, in many cases but too justly, in relation to the mischiefs connected with the present licensing system and the consumption of strong liquors as it is now carried on."

That is the statement of the late Mr. Gladstone, and I have brought the attention of the House to the point which, to my mind, is the most vital of all in considering this Bill. To my mind it is perfectly clear that the present Prime Minister and the man who was Prime Minister in 1880 are of two different opinions altogether. So far as I am concerned, I am quite content to take my stand on the statement made by the late Mr. Gladstone in support of the contention which I and my right hon. friend beside me have made to-night. That contention from the first has been that these people have an equitable title—what Mr. Gladstone called a legislative title—to the property, to the possessions with which the Government are going to deal. Therefore, they have an equitable claim to the full and fair compensation which is their due. And when I say "fair," I mean by that expression, that the measure of compensation should be the value of the possession, of the property or whatever you call it, which is taken away from the man to whom it belongs. I do not think anyone will deny the justice and soundness of that principle or the force of it. You do not propose, and I think it would be impossible under the terms of this Bill, to give anything approaching the full market value of the property of which you are going to deprive these men by the non-renewal of their licences, and above all by the fourteen years time-limit. In my opinion there is no political principle more universally accepted than this, that whenever the State, for any great public purpose, thinks it right and feels it its duty to take away property from individuals—the State, of course, is within its full right in doing this—nobody denies that—it has always given to the man the full and fair pecuniary equivalent of the value of his property of which he is deprived. That is a doctrine which I have heard laid down in the House over and over again by men of the greatest possible authority, and by nobody more so than Mr. Gladstone. I want to say a word more of what the Prime Minister said about expectation of renewal, and what we call an equitable title and an equitable claim. The right hon. Gentleman says that an expectation of renewal cannot be considered at all a form of property. Why not? I differ from the Prime Minister *in toto*. I absolutely deny his contention. And I say on the other hand that it has been regarded and treated as such over and over again by Parliament, by the law of prescription, and up to the last moment before the introduction of this Bill by the Government itself. I can give absolute proof of that by referring to the well-known case which my right hon. friend the Member for Dublin and other hon. Gentlemen have quoted. [MINISTERIAL ironical laughter.] Hon. Gentlemen opposite seem to be pretty well tired of that case already, and I am not in the least surprised at it. I cannot help that. It is upon the quotation of this concrete case that I rely as a proof of my contention. It is the case of the "Coach and Horses" public-house. [Renewed MINISTERIAL ironical laughter.] I know it is a very disagreeable subject to hon. Gentlemen opposite. [MINISTERIAL cries of "No."] It is in support of my contention that these things have been treated as property and as possessions, and have to be taken into account in reply to the statement of the Prime Minister. The facts are simply these: This public-house was sold recently for £10,000. The conveyance was dated October, 1907. The deed was stamped and passed by the Treasury Solicitor in November—the last transaction being dated 14th November, 1907—just at the time when the Cabinet sat to settle the measures to be submitted to Parliament this year. This house has been valued since without a licence at £2,150 and the average valuation was made by no less than three different experts of the highest possible reputation. Supposing under this Bill that the renewal of the licence of this house were refused, I have been told that that which you call an "expectation," and Mr. Gladstone calls a "legislative title," does not give the purchaser an equitable claim to full compensation under the particular circumstances. How could any purchaser believe that any English Government could sell a valuable property of this kind to a purchaser, and then, the moment his back was turned, by their own deed, could diminish its value without securing to the purchaser full compensation? And yet, with your time-limit, as has been pointed out over and over again, it is impossible to do so in such a case as that without ruin to all concerned. I want to ask this question: "Was renewal a just expectation or not?" I want to put this question to this Government. There is a very prominent leading Cabinet Minister sitting opposite me now. I want to put this question to him and to the Prime Minister, and I hope that we shall receive an answer to it before the close of the debate. "Was the expectation of renewal on the part of the purchaser of the 'Coach and Horses' from the Government a property or not?" There are many other matters on which I would have liked to say something, but it is impossible for me at this hour of the night. But the second point of my objection to the Bill is that the Government have nothing to show us which gives the least probability that they are likely to accomplish their end by the particular methods they have proposed. All the facts and figures—all the statistics on which they ought to have relied—proves that their particular methods will not succeed.

And, it being Eleven of the Clock, the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed upon Monday next.

Adjourned at four minutes after
Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Friday, 1st *May*, 1908.

The House met at Twelve noon of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Widnes Corporation Bill.—As amended, considered; Amendments made; Bill to be read the third time.

Llanelly Gas Bill [Lords].—Read a second time, and committed.

PETITIONS.

CHILDREN BILL.

Petitions in favour; from Brighton; Douglas Water; Edinburgh; Glasgow; and Rawden; to lie upon the Table.

COAL MINES (EIGHT HOURS) (No. 2) BILL.

Petitions in favour: From Bankton; Bedlington; Blaen cae Gurwen; Church Lane; Clay Pit; Cortonwood Colliery; Dudley; Elphinston; Fence; Grange Moor; Greenfield; Grimethorpe; Havannah and Southport; Hepworth; Hulton; House of Muir; Leicestershire Miners' Association; Lepton; Lidgett Colliery; Little Lever; Lower Darwen; Manvers Main; Mitchell Main; New Pwll Bach, Ystalyfera; Newtown (No. 2) Pit; North Walbottle; Ormiston; Penrhiwceiber; Penston; Pontefract; Prestonkirk; Riggonhead; Rotherham; Silkstone; Strafford Main; Stanhope Silkstone; Strafford Main; Rob Royd; Tow Stubbin; Tranent; Wallsend; Wombwell Main; Woodhall; and Woodthorpe; to lie upon the Table.

DAIRIES (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Sanquhar, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Lasswade, against; to lie upon the Table.

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION (ENGLAND AND WALES BILL.)

Petitions in favour; From Hartlepool; Hirwain; Llanse; and Saxmundham; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSING BILL.

Petitions against: From Aberlour; Alkborough; Ashby; Barnsley (three); Barton on Humber; Basingstoke; Brigg (two); Bristol; Broughton; Burton; Burton Bridge; Castle Donington; Cavendish Bridge; Chigwell; Chippenham (two); Cliffe Bridge; Crondall; Cropstone; Dunkirk; Dunmow; Earl Soham; East Halton; Eastling; Faversham (thirteen); Frodingham Goxhill; Grays; Grays Thurrock; Gunness; Hallamshire (three); Harlow; Hartington; Hathern; Hemington; Hernhill; Higham; Hillsbro'; Hull (three); Kirton Lindsey; Lamberhurst; Laxfield; Leicester; Long Whitton; Loughborough; Lynsted; Malmesbury; Mapplewell; Merthyr Tydfil; Messingham; Monmouth; Mountsorrel; New Brumby; North Kelsey; Oare; Ospringe (two); Oxford; Quorn; Reading (three); Redbourne; Rotherham; Scawby; Scunthorpe; Sedgrave; Selling; Sellinge; Sheffield (eight); Shepshed; Sherburn (two); Sileby; Skelmanthorpe; Snitterby; South Elmsall; Statisfield; Teynham (three), Throwley; Waddingham; West Bergholt; Westerham; West Halton; Winteringham; Winterton; Witney; Woodhouse; Woolton; Wombwell; Wrawby; Wymeswold; and Yatesbury; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSING BILL.

Petitions for alteration: From Bromley and Shortlands; Rawdon; and Sutton in Craven; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSING BILL.

Petitions in favour: From Aberdare (five); Aberdeen (eleven); Airdrie; Alness (two); Altrincham; Alvaston; Anglesey (two); Annan (two); Ardrossan; Ashby de la Zouche; Aston on Trent; Aycliffe; Ayr; Bagillt; Baildon; Balgowrie; Bangor Isycord; Barnsley (five); Barras; Barton on Humber; Batley; Beckenham; Bedlinog; Birmingham; Blackburn (two); Blaenycoed; Bognor; Bolton; Boscombe; Boston; Bournemouth; Bower; Bracknell; Brentford; Brierfield; Brighouse; Bristol (two); Bromley; Brondesbury; Broxburn (two); Bryn Awel; Brynford; Buckley (two); Budwell; Burgh Parva; Burnley;

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

Bury; Caithness; Careglefn; Chapeltown; Charlton; Cefncoed (two); Cilcain; Clackmannan; Clacton on Sea; Coalmaughten; Coedpoeth; Connah's Quay (three); Corsham; Cullen; Craigmailen; Cramond; Crossford; Cruden; Cwmaman; Dalkeith (two); Dartmouth; Denholme; Dewsbury; Dingwall; Dodworth; Doncaster; Dowlais (two); Dundee; Dunfermline; Dumfries (six); Durham; Eaglescliffe; Ecclesfield; Edinburgh (two); Elgin (two); Elland; Enderby (two); Fakenham (two); Fala; Falmouth; Farnworth; Farsley; Ferryhill; Ffynnon Groew; Fighting Cocks; Fishponds; Fordingbridge; Frodsham; Garth; Gillingham; Gwespyr; Glan Conway; Glasgow (nine); Goldsithney; Golftyn (two); Gosforth; Gourock; Grangemouth; Grays; Greasbro'; Great Yarmouth; Greenfield; Greengate; Guiseley; Haddington; Hanley; Hanwell; Harlesden; Harringay; Harrow; Hartlepool; Heaton; Hebden Bridge; Haverton Hill; Hendon; Henley on Thames; Heyhington; Hilton; Hirwain (seven); Holyhead; Holywell; Hope; Horsforth; Houghton le Skerne; Huddersfield (two); Hull (eight); Huncote; Ilkley; Illingworth; Innerwick; Inverness; Juniper Green (two); Kelvedon; Kilbarchan; Kilsyth; King's Lynn; Kingskettle; Kinsley; Kintore; Kirkmarden; Kirkmalive; Kirkmuirhill; Knockbain; Knottingly (two); Landore; Leeds; Leicester (two); Leith; Lelant; Lemington on Tyne; Lewis; Lightcliffe; Liskeard; Littlehampton; Littlethorpe; Llanarmon; Llanddanirl; Llanefydd; Llanfachraith; Llanfairpyho; Llangaffi; Llangollen (two); Llynypandy; Llwyn Mawr; Loftus; Lochcarron (two); Lochmaben; Lockerbie; Loyland; Luddenden; Lutterworth (two); Manchester; Mancott; Maryburgh; Merthyr Tydfil (seven); Mid Calder (two); Milton; Mold; Morriston; Morton; Mostyn; Mountain Ash; Narborough; Nelson; Netherthong (two); Newbattle; New Benwell; Norwich; Nottingham (four); Nutfield; Oadby; Oakenholt; Old Machar; Otley; Oxford; Papa Westray; Partick; Pen Llyn; Penmynydd; Penpont; Pentre Bwlch; Penycae; Penygraigwen; Penyrheolgerrig; Peterhead; Perth (four); Ponfeigh; Pontefract (two); Pontyberem; Port Glasgow (two); Port Talbot (two); Ravensthorpe; Redhill; Rhosgoch; Rotherham (three); Royston; Rutherford; Sadburge; St. Ives (two); St. Just; St. Leonards; Sale; Salisbury; Sandycroft; Sanquhar (two); Sarn; Southampton (three); Saxmundham (four); Seaham Harbour; Sedgefield; Shebbear; Sheffield (three); Sheringham; Shieldaig; Shipley; Skelmanthorpe (two); Southall; Southport; South Sletton; Sowerby (two); Sparkbrook (two); Staines; Stainland; Stepney; Stockport; Stockton; Street; Summerhouse; Sutherland; Swadlincote; Tain; Tarporley; Temple; Thorne; Thornley; Thorpe Hesley; Tisbury (two); Torbay; Trelech; Trenddyn (four); Trewarmett; Tryddyn; Troedyrhew (three); Utley; Wallsend; Walsingham; Walthamstow (six); Waverton; West Calder; West Cornwall; West Ham; Westminster (two); Westminster Chapel; Weston Rhyn; Weston super Mare (two); Wigston Wigston Magna (two); Witheridge Woodford (two); Woodhouse; Wortley; and Ysceifiog (two); to lie upon the Table.

LIQUOR TRAFFIC (LOCAL OPTION) (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Cupar, against; to lie upon the Table.

LIQUOR TRAFFIC (LOCAL OPTION) (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petitions in favour: From Addiewell; Airdrie; Banff; Birsay; Bonnyrigg; Crail; Dalkeith; Dumfries; Glasgow; Hallside; Kilbarchan; Largs; Macduff; Maybole; Portmahomack; and Thurso; to lie upon the Table.

PUBLIC-HOUSES (EXCLUSION OF CHILDREN) (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petitions in favour: From Ayr; Dumfries; and Perth; to lie upon the Table.

RIGHTS OF WAY (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Midlothian, against; to lie upon the Table.

SHOPS BILL.

Petition from Midlothian, against; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

REFORMATORY AND INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS (GREAT BRITAIN).

Copy presented, of Fifty-first Report of His Majesty's Inspector of Reformatory and Industrial Schools for 1907. Part I. List of Schools and Detailed Reports [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Copy presented, of Memorandum explanatory of the Provisions of the Bill [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

IRISH RAILWAYS (VICEREGAL COMMISSION).

Copy presented, of Third Report of the Commissioners [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

IRISH RAILWAYS (VICEREGAL COMMISSION).

Copy presented, of Appendix to Third Report of the Commissioners [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Contracts for Mails to the Far East.

MR. O'MALLEY (Galway, Connemara): To ask the Postmaster-General whether, before entering into a contract with the Canadian-Pacific Railway Company for the carriage of mails, he will give an opportunity to the Irish representatives to see the terms of it; is he aware that the Canadian-Pacific Railway runs through American territory, and therefore cannot be called an all-British route.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) The proposed contract for a mail service with the Far East will be submitted to this House for confirmation.

Military Operations in India.

MR. BELLAIRS (Lynn Regis): To ask the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he can complete the Returns issued in 1900, showing that military operations had been undertaken by India between 1848 and 1898 on no less than 110 occasions, by stating on how many occasions military operations have been undertaken by India on the North-West frontier, the North-East frontier, and beyond India in the period 1899–1908, inclusive.

(*Answered by Mr. Buchanan.*) The Secretary of State for India will ask the Government of India to prepare a Return of the principal military operations since 1898.

Guns and Shell—Private and Government Manufacture.

MR. JAMES HOPE (Sheffield, Central): To ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office whether he can state the total value of guns and shell manufactured and delivered for the War Office during the financial year ended 31st March, 1908; and what proportion of such value represents guns and shell delivered under contract by private firms.

(*Answered by Mr. Acland.*) The information asked for is not available. All that can be given readily is the approximate expenditure on guns and gun ammunition, and these figures include the expenditure on mountings as well as on guns (including spare parts), on cordite for filling shell, and on repairs to artillery equipments. This total expenditure was approximately £933,000, of which £590,000 represents expenditure in the ordnance factories.

SHOPS BILL.

Order for Second Reading read.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean) said the Bill of which he rose to move the Second Reading had been before the House for a great number of years. It had, indeed, been before both Houses, for although never introduced in the House of Lords, it was the subject of prolonged inquiry in which a great number of witnesses from all parts of the country gave evidence before a Committee of that House. During the last three years he had been anxious that his hon. friend the Member for St. Helens should take charge of the Bill, inasmuch as he was the direct representative in the House of the body which was principally concerned with him originally in drawing the Bill, the National Union of

Shop Assistants. That Bill was no doubt the joint work of some connected with the Parliamentary Committee of the Trades Congress and the National Union of Shop Assistants and of some representatives of the shopkeepers in certain trades who were favourable to the Bill, although many of their colleagues were opposed to it on detail. It had been the wish of the National Union of Shop Assistants, against his own, that he should continue to be in charge of the fortunes of the Bill in the House of Commons. It had certain advantages over other forms of labour legislation and certain special difficulties in its way. It was usual to object to almost all forms of drastic or stringent labour legislation, arguments which were those of the old Ricardo religion and mainly on two heads, the head which concerned cheapness for export trades and the question, therefore, of protection and free trade, and the head of individual personal liberty. As regarded the export trade, that did not arise in shops legislation. It was a purely domestic and internal question, and they were entirely free from that difficulty. As regarded the personal liberty side, the restriction of the hours of grown persons in shops was already law. The Act of 1904 of the late Conservative Government gave the most stringent powers of compulsorily shortening the hours of the opening of shops, and although it did not contain a clause directly dealing with the hours of shop assistants, the dealing with the hours of shops themselves constituted that interference with what was called the individual liberty of the shopkeeper to open as long as he pleased to which objection was now raised. That law had been operative in only a few places as regarded all trades and most of the orders under it were concerned only with single trades, but the principle was there and in Glasgow and in its neighbourhood there was a general order concerning almost all trades. The history of this subject he would only touch so far as was necessary in order to make the position clear. In former days the scheme of this Bill and that of Lord Avebury's original Bill were rival schemes. When Lord Avebury became a peer he raised his Bill again in another place and a Committee was appointed on which the late Lord Salisbury, who up to that time had opposed all legislation of this kind, had a seat. Lord Salisbury took a more active part in the proceedings of that Committee than he was ever known to take on any Committee in the House of Lords. He examined all the witnesses and became curiously friendly to the principle of this Bill as compared with that of the more optional Bill of Lord Avebury. If Members would look back at the evidence before the House of Lords Committee they would find that Lord Salisbury when he opposed Lord Avebury's Report and carried his own paragraphs, which were adopted unanimously, based himself upon their argument and for their Bill, preferring it on the whole to the other plans. As regarded that House, in 1903 the Member for East Norfolk carried unanimously a Resolution, for which the Bill had been withdrawn. The Resolution was opposed by the then Government. It was accepted as regarded what might be called the first part of the Bill, the closing of shops, but it was fiercely opposed as regarded the hours clause. In spite of the very strong opposition by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the St. Augustine Division of Kent, the House at the last unanimously adopted that Resolution, the Government not venturing to divide. In the following year they brought in their Government Bill, which he opposed on the same grounds as those on which he was proceeding now and on which the Resolution of 1903 was carried. They allowed the Government Bill to pass. It came at the end of the session to a question whether they should stop it, as they were in a position to do, or whether they should encourage the Government to pass it, although they had opposed it on the grounds which he was about to offer in support of this Bill. They decided to let it pass, and it did pass, because they thought the experiment would be valuable in both directions, both because its failure to obtain a general shortening of hours would help their case, and, on the other hand, the experience gained in certain places by the shortening of hours under the scheme of that Bill might be useful as a guide. The House of Commons had unanimously resolved last year that it had been a failure—they were the words contained in their unanimous Resolution last year. They therefore came straight to the question of what ought to be the remedy for universally admitted evils. It would be a waste of

Sir Charles Dilke.

time for the House of Commons to discuss the nature of those evils. There was no contest with regard to the evils of long hours and the advantage of shortening them. The whole question was one of detailed plan, and of the objections offered to any particular scheme. That being so, they had to consider generally what their line of action ought to be. There was one exception last year to the universal admission of failure everywhere. The Home Secretary admitted the general failure, and accepted that word in the Resolution, but said he thought in Glasgow there had been a success. He (Sir Charles Dilke) had therefore very carefully examined since that time the nature of the Glasgow experiment and the working of the Glasgow Order. He had not at all confined himself to the representatives of the shop assistants or, indeed, of the traders concerned, but he had taken opinions from Glasgow, as impartial as he could possibly obtain, from men of strong common sense, and men who, by their avocations, were not likely to be prejudiced on one side or the other. Generally speaking, he thought it was the opinion of the Scottish Government that the Act was a failure in Scotland as in England. If Glasgow was an exception, it was only Glasgow. The Lord-Advocate had issued a circular-letter and he (Sir Charles Dilke) had a note of the replies, and the burghs by ten to one reported the Act to be a failure. There was also a general Return before the House, which included Scotland. There were 117 burghs on the Roll, and of those Orders had only been made in fourteen at the time of the circular and in fifteen now. Most of these Orders were not general or even extensive Orders as regarded the number of trades included, but were mostly Orders only for one class of shop, and in very many cases, like the vast majority of the English Orders, only for hairdressers' shops. That was no general or even large application of the Act. In reply to the circular, ten burghs had expressed their satisfaction with the present Act, and a large majority of the others had said they wished for more drastic legislation. In Glasgow, to which he therefore returned as the one alleged success—and he did not wish to dispute the success, but only to examine the facts as to Glasgow — there was a very large number of trades included in the Order, the list of which revealed at once the greatest difficulty with which, since the Orders had been proposed, Glasgow had had to contend, and that was the composite shop. A great number of shops in the list had names which showed they were on the border line of several trades, and the result was that the poll, where they had to poll trade by trade and get a majority in every trade, was extraordinarily complicated in its nature. That was one of the complications which it was the wish of the promoters of his Bill to remove. If they had a poll at all, which was put in as a safeguard, though he did not wish for it, it should be a general poll and not a poll trade by trade. They ought to avoid this complication of trades on the border line. At the time of the proposal of the large Order in Glasgow there was the same objection raised on behalf of the small shopkeepers in the suburbs which was alleged now, and of which he had no doubt they would hear from opponents of the Bill. They had received many circulars in which that difficulty was alleged. That was the main objection taken in advance to the Glasgow Orders. The difficulty which had arisen since the Orders had been made was the difficulty of the composite shops. The Corporation had gone to litigation and had been supported by decisions of the Courts, so that they had had their way, and the Act had worked, although with friction. As regarded the small shops the most impartial authorities in Glasgow to whom he had been able to appeal and from whom he had had private opinions for his own guidance, stated that the hardship alleged in Glasgow in advance had not in practice been considerable. One informant to whose opinion he attached the very greatest weight, and whose name he could not give because he got his opinion on the strict condition that it was for his own guidance only, told him that the small shopkeepers in the suburbs opposed the Orders of the Corporation on the very ground which was now alleged, that they did all their trade in the evening, and many of them did not employ any shop assistants, and ought not, they thought, to come under any legislation. Of course, he regarded as a Committee point the point of whether there should be any exception of shops by reason of their not employing assistants.

It was not a vital principle of the Bill, and in every one of our Colonies, and in all foreign countries where there had been legislation of this nature, there had always been Committee discussion on that question, and in some of the most successful Colonial laws that exception existed. Nevertheless, although there was no exception made in Glasgow, and the law was general, "grumbling has now ceased," and the hardship alleged had not been found practically to exist. But recently in Glasgow there had been a strike on hours, and the revelations of that strike, in a town which possessed a drastic Order affecting most trades, and affecting the trade in which the strike had taken place, were curious, and deserving of some attention. One allegation had been made in the Glasgow Press, and another had been made on the authority of the Glasgow and West of Scotland Council of the National Union of Shop Assistants. The two were not exactly the same, but he would frankly state the difference. It was alleged in the Press that the usual number of hours in the great grocer's shop where the strike occurred was seventy-nine per week—long hours, of course, but not the longest known of—and that they ran up to 100 during the busy periods of the year, which was, of course, very long hours indeed. The Glasgow and West of Scotland Council of the National Union of Shop Assistants said that the minimum number of hours was seventy-nine and that the exceptional hours were over 100 per week. He had carefully inquired how it was possible that hours so long should be worked in the case of a city where a general Order of a drastic nature under the Act of 1904 existed, and the result was very curious, because it bore upon a portion of this Bill to which the promoters attached extreme importance and was specifically mentioned in the Resolution of the House in 1903 and was the ground of the opposition which the then Government offered, not being able to take their objection to the division lobby. The Order in Glasgow he was told, and it seemed paradoxical, had not caused a reduction of hours. It had caused a redistribution but not a reduction, and the reason was because in the present law there was no clause limiting the hours of shop assistants. It only limited the hours of the opening of shops, and the redistribution alluded to, which had caused some shop assistants hours in Glasgow to be increased, meant that the letter orders were attended to after the shop was shut instead of during the hours the shop was open, and of course in addition there was all the preparation of the shop for the next day's work. These facts showed that it was necessary in dealing with this subject to include a clause restricting the hours of shop assistants, and he asked his Glasgow adviser how he thought the working of the local Order, and the strike bore upon this point, and he said—

> "The long hours caused by keeping men working, making up letter orders and preparing goods for the following day's sale, after the shop is closed to the public."

That was a point to which they attached vital importance. In 1904 the hon. Baronet the Member for the City of London got into some trouble because he had always opposed their proposal on general grounds, and they thought those general grounds of opposition were equally applicable to the Bill of the then Government. After some hesitation the hon. Baronet finally came down on the Government side and supported the measure.

SIR F. BANBURY: It is quite true there was a considerable difficulty. What took place was that I first said I should vote for the Amendment of my right hon. friend. Then when it came to be explained it seemed to me to be so bad that I voted for the Bill of my own Party, which though very bad was not quite as bad.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE said that if he could conceive that for a moment he could hold the hon. Baronet's views, he would have acted as he did upon that occasion. The form of the present Act, if hon. Members would look at it, contrasted with the form of this Bill, really told the whole story. The Resolution of last year set forth that in the unanimous opinion of this House more drastic legislation was required. The Glasgow Order, which was a drastic one, had shown the strength of the administration of the Corporation of Glasgow, because it had been most efficiently enforced, and yet the weakness of the law had been clearly shown and exactly the difficulties had arisen which were foreseen. It was agreed on all hands that the existing law had broken down and was a dead letter. When

Parliament was unanimously convinced of the need for dealing with this question, it passed a law so hedged about with numerous and unnecessary securities that even Lord Avebury himself prophesied its failure. Almost everybody agreed that more drastic legislation was required. He was aware that there was a good deal of difference of opinion in regard to the hours clause. He was prepared to assert that all opponents of this Bill who had shown their hands by resolutions were favourable to the general principle, which was the main issue at stake upon the Second Reading of the Bill. The objections which had been raised to this measure were really Committee matters, and not questions of principle. One of the most authorised of the representatives of those hostile to the Bill was the gentleman representing the National Chamber of Trade at the annual conference of that body held at Derby. The incoming president delivered an address upon this subject, in which he said that "the Shops Bill like the Shop Hours Act was to be condemned because the powers were to be enforced and controlled by the local authority instead of by Parliament." That argument was only partly true of this Bill. In the same speech was a proposal for the adoption of one of the most drastic forms of colonial law upon this question. The same speaker said—

> "What was needed was a national Bill, nationally controlled, and applicable to every retail shop in the Kingdom. Many of the difficulties of this Bill would arise when it was applied locally, but would disappear if the Bill was made national."

The speech concluded with a request for "a national Bill like that of New South Wales." That was a very curious demand coming from this great body of shopkeepers. If he thought there was any chance of the New South Wales Act being accepted he would be quite ready to join with them. That measure, however, was not consistent with the administrative methods of the old country, but he would at once close with that offer if he thought there was any chance of its being accepted and being carried into law. The New South Wales law was under a statute of 1899, and an amending law of 1900. It was not quite true that the New South Wales law was absolutely national or uniform. The local authority in New South Wales had the same power as this Bill proposed of settling which should be the day. There was also the further local power that upon a memorial from one-third of the shop-keepers of any of the municipalities of New South Wales there could be a poll. That poll would have to be held under conditions which would be regarded as unduly democratic in this country by those who opposed this Bill. In that poll every shopkeeper had only one vote, but every shop assistant over eighteen years of age also had a vote, and so it was really the shop assistants who decided the question. In this colonial measure, apart from the usual exceptions, there was a sixty hours clause, and besides that, there was a further limitation that the assistants could not be employed more than half-an-hour after the doors of the shop were closed to the public on any one day. He wished to deal with one or two other suggestions made by their opponents in regard to the difficulties raised by this Bill and he would only take the most important resolutions. The Leeds Chamber of Trade had passed a resolution against this Bill, but in moving that resolution the chairman said—

> "Some shopkeepers in Leeds kept open late every night, making eighty hours in the week [Shame]. He had tried to set an example by closing early, but without fresh legislation he feared there would be no agreement."

Even that body agreed with them that fresh legislation was necessary, and that view was endorsed by the House of Commons. The resolution carried by the Leeds Chamber of Trade was in favour of a universal voluntary closing. A sub-committee was appointed to consider the question of days and hours, but the meeting "could not come to any agreement." He did not think they could have a better proof than that of the need for legislation of the kind he was proposing. One great London association, the Hackney Traders' Association, had resolved that this measure was a nefarious Bill. The president of that body, who moved the resolution and who used the word "nefarious," said that this Bill was "too drastic," although "personally he would like to see much earlier closing." Even among the members of that body there was a certain amount of uneasiness as to the hours. He thought, however, that the opinion of London was better expressed by the resolution passed in March last at the special conference of the London Municipal Authorities held at St. Pancras, over which the Mayor of St. Pancras presided, and which represented the City of London, the City of Westminster, and nearly all the Metropolitan boroughs. The conference was called in order "to arrive at a definite conclusion upon" this subject which they had been discussing "on and off for the last twelve years." The conveners of the conference had sent round the official resolution which declared that "with the usual exceptions, all shops should be limited to seventy hours per week." The chairman of the conference in moving the resolution said "There was no reason why people should shop all night; many people would do so, but that was pure selfishness." Subsequently, an amendment was moved. The amendment declared that the Shop Hours Act was never likely to be of any practical use, and "should be amended to embrace the area of the Metropolitan Police district and made compulsory for all trades." That amendment was carried by a proportion of three to two. He claimed, therefore that the whole of the representation at that meeting was practically in favour of this Bill. Both the resolution and the amendment were to that effect. In conclusion, he stated that it was impossible to accept the "alternatives" of either the first part of the Bill, providing for general shorter hours, or of a sixty-hours week for shop assistants. Amendments in detail might be made, but they must have both parts of the Bill.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Sir Charles Dilke.*)

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. GLADSTONE, Leeds, W.): I apologise to the House for intervening so early in this debate, but I have during the present week attended the House so closely that the necessary work of my Department is getting into arrears. I entirely agree with my hon. friend that there is no necessity to examine into the mischiefs which are inseparable from the long hours of work which are customary in perhaps the great majority of shops throughout the country, and, especially, the conditions under which these hours have to be worked. To my mind there is nothing that comes before the House of higher importance than any question affecting directly the health of the people. I know what are the views of the hon. Baronet opposite as to State interference with the conditions of labour, but probably he would say that where you can show long hours are worked under conditions detrimental to the health of a very considerable portion of the population then it is essential that the State should interfere to remedy the evil.

SIR F. BANBURY indicated dissent.

MR. GLADSTONE: He shakes his head. He is inexorable. He seems to think that the State is to stand idle, although it sees hundreds of thousands of people degenerating every year because of the unsatisfactory conditions of their employment. I respectfully demur from the hon. Baronet. I will say this: at any rate we are practically all agreed that, whether or not this measure be the correct remedy, the hours worked in shops are unduly long. Therefore, so far as I am concerned, I look with great sympathy upon the objects and intentions of the Bill. The Bill imposes a maximum per week of sixty hours. It may be said that that is another direct interference to control the hours of labour. Well, that is so. Personally I have long ceased to be terrified at the old argument that we ought to do nothing which might by any chance interfere with the free discretion, as it is called, of adult people to wear themselves to death by working at their employment, and I am not going to address myself now to the hon. Baronet, because my argument in his case would, I believe, be of no use. It would be perfectly useless to think that there is any hope of my being able to convert him to my views. I would rather address myself to my hon. friend on the front bench who was responsible for the Act of 1904, and it is not necessary to remind him that, although that Act proceeds on very different lines from those of the Bill we are now discussing, yet in point of fact it does involve an interference with adult labour.

SIR F. BANBURY: We make mistakes on this side sometimes.

MR. GLADSTONE: I have no doubt that my hon friend the Member for North Ayrshire will subsequently answer the hon. baronet. I wish to restate the views of the Government on this subject. Last year on May 1st the hon. Member for the Clitheroe division brought forward a motion on the subject, on which I spoke, and I may perhaps quote to the House what I said in regard to the views of the Government on this question. I said:

> "There are a variety of methods of dealing with this question. There is the suggested Bill of my right hon. friend the Member for the Forest of Dean, but I think that he will admit that it would undoubtedly take a great deal of time to pass. There are the alternative methods of a compulsory clause or a limitation of hours. There is a further alternative, that of a combination of the principle of the compulsory clauses with the principle of this Bill to amend the present Act. I am not asked to state our intention with regard to a Government Bill at the present time, and I do not commit myself on that point; but I frankly admit that the case for an amending Bill has been made out."

So far as I am concerned I entirely adhere to what I said on that occasion. It must be admitted that the Bill which we are now considering is not in the nature of an amending measure. It seeks to effect the same object as the 1904 Act, but by more direct and drastic methods. I do not think my right hon. friend who moved the Second Reading of the Bill quoted the late Lord Salisbury, but I understood him to say that Lord Salisbury was rather in favour of the principle——

*SIR CHARLES DILKE: Half of the witnesses called by Lord Avebury in favour of his Bill spoke in favour of this one and against his, and then unexpectedly Lord Salisbury, on the day of the Report, came down and opposed the principal clause of the Report, and the clauses which he put in will, if looked at, be seen to favour this scheme rather than that ultimately adopted.

MR. GLADSTONE: I am obliged to my right hon. friend for stating exactly what he understood to have been the action of the late Lord Salisbury on that matter, and it is undoubtedly a very interesting reference of which, no doubt, more will be heard. I also noted the remark made by my right hon. friend that he himself was not absolutely wedded to this Bill as it stands. He quoted the view, as I understood him, of the National Chamber of Trade, being rather in favour of the New South Wales Bill. My right hon. friend said that he had no objection to consider the substitution of that Bill for the present one.

SIR CHARLES DILKE: I observed that it is very much on the lines of our Bill, because it contains two parts.

MR. GLADSTONE: Quite so. That only means that we have not arrived exactly at finality in regard to this matter, even from the right hon. Gentleman's point of view. Then, of course, this Bill goes very much further than the Act at present in force, and its various clauses affect in numberless ways the whole shop life of the country. I only wish to bring to the notice of the House that this Bill is not to be measured by the number of its clauses, but that it is a Bill I think I might almost say of first-class importance, and, therefore, it is a matter which requires and demands the very close and careful, and even the prolonged, consideration of the House. That being so, I wish to indicate to the House some of the points which I have in my mind as requiring very great consideration, and in offering certain criticisms of the Bill I wish the House to understand that I do not do it in any hostile manner, but in order to show that it is absolutely essential on the part of the Government that proposals of this kind should be subjected to close and careful scrutiny. The Bill, as I understand it, is to apply to all shops throughout the country, from the great establishments in London down to the humble place occupied by an old woman who sells sweets in a country village. That is a tolerably wide range. How is it to be enforced? The existing powers of local authorities to appoint inspectors in regard to shop hours are to be repealed, and the whole of the work is to be put upon the factory inspectors.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE: And the police.

MR. GLADSTONE: So far as the Government inspectors are concerned the whole of the work is to be put on the factory inspectors. No doubt we shall have explanations of this clause from hon. Members who are fully cognisant of the work of the factory inspectors, but I would say that if you took away every single inspector or inspector's assistant from his present work of inspecting the factories and workshops of the country and put him to the task of enforcing the hours in shops under this Bill, they would be wholly inadequate to the purpose. I repeat, how do you propose to enforce the Act? Every authority throughout the country, whether it be a city council, a town council, an urban or a district council, is at once to issue an Order affecting all shops with the exception of those mentioned in the Schedule. If any objection is raised in any particular area, what is to happen, and how are the objections to be considered? The only method suggested by the Bill is that the local authority may call a meeting of the ratepayers, who may rescind or modify the Order at a public meeting. Now, in London, the area is to be the area of the London County Council.

*Sir CHARLES DILKE said that the precedent for that clause of the Bill was the procedure adopted in the Borough Funds Act.

Mr. GLADSTONE: From the point of view of the Government the machinery proposed is open to the greatest disadvantages. I would ask the House to imagine that strong objection was taken by the shop assistants to an Order issued by the London County Council, and that the London County Council summoned a meeting of the whole of the London ratepayers. They must meet somewhere under regulations for which the Home Secretary would be responsible.

*Sir CHARLES DILKE: That power exists already under the Borough Funds Act.

Mr. GLADSTONE: But this Bill is of a very different nature in what it does from the Borough Funds Act. In any case the ratepayers may be very strongly and immediately affected by this measure, and they may wish to exercise the powers under the Act. And if they insisted, what arrangement can be made for adequate consideration of the details of the Order issued by the London County Council? Then I understand that if at some meeting the Order is rescinded, there is no power in the Bill for reviving it. It is dead for ever. Apart from that question, suppose an objection is made to a particular Order in a particular area, I understand there is no particular provision in the Bill to provide that the local authority shall consider the objection to the Order. In several respects this Bill may be founded on principle, but it must be considered as a Bill of special importance in regard to particular details. For instance, in regard to Sunday closing there is no provision in the Bill for the exceptional treatment of Jews. That is a serious matter.

*Sir CHARLES DILKE said he would be quite prepared to consider the provisions in regard to that contained in the Factory Acts.

Mr. GLADSTONE: There is another point. Clause 9 provides for the prohibition of the employment of children in or about a shop. I think on general principles there is a great deal to be said for that, but I call attention to the fact that in a number of places there are bye-laws which after careful consideration provide for the employment of child labour in a particular area in order to meet the public interests involved. I understand that in such places there may be very much objection to the clause in the Bill which actually says that no child under the age of fourteen shall be employed in or about a shop. There are many other points to be considered. For instance, by Clause 2 the hours fixed by the Closing Order are on one day in each week at or before one o'clock in the afternoon; on three other days in each week at or before seven o'clock in the evening; on one other day in each week at or before nine o'clock in the evening; and on one other day in each week at or before ten o'clock in the evening. But who is to fix these hours? Is the local authority to have power to fix any hour before one o'clock, and if once the hour is fixed has it the power to alter that hour? That seems to me to be giving the local authority a very drastic and dangerous power of interfering unduly and unnecessarily, without having the fullest consideration of all the objections which may be raised, with the hours of the various shops in particular areas. Sub-section (2) refers to "such exemptions and conditions as may be contained in the Order." But what are these objections and these conditions? The Bill says nothing as to their nature or their extent; so that there we are again brought up by the fact that the Bill does not tell us what it really means or what is really intended. Again, Clause 4, Sub-section (4) provides that—

> "A person shall not be deemed to be exempted from the operation of this section on the ground that he is an apprentice or an improver, or a member of the occupier's family."

How are you to prevent the child of a shopkeeper from doing odd jobs in the shop either during the hours of labour or after closing hours? The thing is absolutely impossible, even if you appointed thousands of inspectors.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE said it was done in workshops under the Factory Acts.

MR. GLADSTONE: It is impossible to meet by legislation the case of the small shopkeeper who does in fact use the members of his family for the purposes of his shopkeeping either before or after closing hours. Clause 7 says that—

> "The provisions of this Act relating to the closing of shops shall not apply to a shop kept open solely for the sale of one or more of the articles specified in the Schedule."

That would have a very curious effect. If a man has a fresh fruit shop he would be exempt from and independent of the provisions of the Bill, but if he sold dry figs he would come under its provisions. I am quite aware that with regard to exemptions provided for in the Schedule, many and great difficulties would arise in connection with those shops which combine the sale of different goods. For instance, a newsagent who sold newspapers only would be exempt, but if he sold a book or a magazine also he would be included under the Bill. These are all important matters to consider, but I will not occupy the House further in considering details. I refer to these points, not for the purpose of being unfriendly to the Bill, but to show the difficulties as to some of the details of a measure which the House is asked to deal with at this period of the session. As to the position of the Government, hon. Members are entirely free to take their own course; but if I vote for the Second Reading I must dissociate myself from some of its clauses, and reserve to myself an absolutely free hand with regard to its proceeding. I repeat what I said last year in the debate on the subject, and reaffirm my opinion that the existing legislation has perfectly broken down and requires to be strengthened. But, having regard to the state of the business of the House, I am certain it is not possible for this Bill to make progress this session. It will require in Committee many days of hard work. [AN HON. MEMBER: "No.") That is a matter of opinion. I have been twenty-eight years in the House, and I am afraid the hon. Gentleman has not had the sad experience I have had in regard to these matters. With all that experience in my mind, and with all the goodwill on my part and that of my colleagues towards this particular case, it is in my opinion practically impossible for the Bill to make progress this session. My hon. colleague and myself are burdened with the near prospect of the Licensing Bill in Committee of this House, we have on our shoulders the Mines (Eight Hours) Bill, and the Children Bill, and we have in addition important administrative work to attend to. I must tell my right hon friend that it is absolutely impossible to deal with more than one case at one time, and with the load of work which is on our shoulders this session, I must honestly tell him that neither my Department nor I have any time to spare for the detailed consideration of this Bill at the present time. But while that is the case, if this Bill is referred to a Committee of the whole House to-day I will undertake to prepare a Bill and introduce it next year, and I hope that that will be satisfactory to my right hon. friend. A promise in the hand is worth two Bills next session. At all events it is well to have a certain promise, and I hope in view of the assurance that the Government are friendly and actively friendly to the purposes of this Bill, if we undertake to bring in a Bill next year to strengthen the existing defective law, that course will commend itself to the House.

*MR. H. H. MARKS (Kent, Thanet) said that in moving the rejection of this Bill he hoped he would not adopt an attitude less friendly than that which the right hon. Gentleman had taken in supporting the measure. He fully recognised that the fact that it involved an interference with individual liberty was one which would have little force with the authors of the measure, nor did he think that it was likely to have much weight with the majority of the Members of this present House. He had, however, some hopes and some reasons for believing that public opinion would only accept this interference with individual liberty on grounds and under circumstances of the plainest necessity, and that to make it an offence in a private trader to attempt to earn his livelihood after a certain hour was to carry interference to an extreme for which opinion was not yet ripe. The effect of such proposals as those contained in the Bill must be unfavourable to employment. As to that they would probably be told that trade must be done if not by the small shopkeeper then by the large one, so that the destruction of the small shopkeeper would merely import the transfer of his employees to other employment and under better conditions. There was, however, this to consider, and it was a point to which he would direct the attention of the House, whether much of this recent legislation of theirs did not by incessant imposition of new conditions, new restrictions, and new inspection affect the total of employment by restricting the enterprise of the country. The conditions might not always be intolerable, but they were unfamiliar and vexatious. In the present instance the increase required in the number of inspectors under Clause 16, as the Home Secretary had pointed out, was so great that if all the inspectors in the country at present, even supplemented by the police, were to attempt the work of inspection required by the Bill they could not perform it.

SIR JOSEPH LEESE (Lancashire, Accrington): Is not this a subject for Committee?

*MR. H. H. MARKS said that what he was referring to related to the general policy of the Bill, and if they went on as they were doing one half of the community would soon be getting its living by inspecting the other half. He objected to the principle of the Bill, moreover, because it was an attack upon the small shopkeeper for the benefit of the large one. That was its essence. He knew it was the theory of some Socialists that if they substituted the large employer for the small, and then the single combination for the large employers, the way might be made easy for the substitution of the State for the combination. If the Bill had been introduced with the object of giving effect to some such scheme as that, he would have thought it admirably adapted to the purpose. It was the first step in the direction of the destruction of the small employer which involved the most cruelty and was the most important. The community might or might not be moving towards Socialism, but the clear aim of this Bill was to give more power to the large capitalist in the hope no doubt, or in the hope probably that the result would tend to Socialism, and even those who did not shrink from the ultimate object aimed at might see that the method was a dangerous one. The essence of the Bill was compulsion. At present local authorities might make Orders under certain conditions, but this Bill said that the authorities must make Orders. The authors of the Bill did not appear to have contemplated the possibility that a local body which had not yet moved might continue to remain at rest, for there was no machinery proposed in case of default. Presumably, where a local authority had not made an Order it had been because there had been no pressure of local public opinion in favour of one. The Bill insisted that the local authority should act in advance of public opinion, that it should, according to Clause 1, as soon as possible make an Order which the local community had not demanded, and with regard to which no considered opinion had been arrived at. And finally, the Bill, having insisted that the local authority should legislate in haste, only allowed it to repent at leisure, for so far as he could gather under its provisions there was no effective machinery for altering an Order once made, and once it came into force it was final, no matter how injurious it might have proved in the working. With regard to the salient features of the Bill, Clause 1 provided that every local authority must make a closing Order fixing the hours at which all shops in its area were to be closed, but no consideration appeared to have been given to the interests of the poor who were bound to do their shopping late at night. Moreover, the definition as to shop was quite inconclusive, and they were left in doubt as to whether this early closing was to affect the vendors who had barrows or portable trays. Under Clause 4, again, a person who was ordinarily employed at a shop must not continue his or her employment more than half-an-hour after the closing hours except on twenty-four days during the year, but to secure even this privilege the shopkeeper must give seven days notice to the factory inspector and post up a notice in his shop. No exception was made and no exemption granted for caretakers, night watchmen, or domestic servants. Clause 6, which dealt with Sunday closing, would, as the Home Secretary had pointed out, cause grave inconvenience to Jewish traders by a complete Sunday closing. This inconvenience would develop into hardship in cases where Saturday might be selected as the day for early closing. In reference to the exemptions from total Sunday closing, the institutions which were offered the advantage of remaining open on Sunday were seven in number, and they must be open solely for the sale of one or more of the articles named in the schedule. "Medicines or medical or surgical appliances" could possibly be solely supplied. But what about "refreshments for consumption on the premises?" That would not assist the working man to get his Sunday dinner cooked in a baker's shop and enjoy it at home. Then they had the exemption of intoxicating liquors, although everybody knew that no shop was open solely for the sale of intoxicating liquors. These exemptions were delusive and absurd. Then let them take Clause 9 by which it was provided that a child under the age of fourteen must not be employed in or about a shop. Under that, grave hardship was bound to be done to the parents of boys who did odd jobs in the morning before they went to school or in the evening after their return. The boys who carried newspapers and even the shopkeeper's own children did not appear to be exempt from the operations of the clause. If such a clause as that was to be adopted, if such an enactment as that was to pass Parliament, no parent could rely upon the help of any of his children even under the most trifling circumstances, and the House was well aware that among the 300,000 shops in the country there were a large number occupied by people of the poorest class who could not afford to engage a shop assistant and had to rely upon the casual, but the no less welcome, assistance of any members of their own families. This Bill, professedly and ostensibly in the interests of shop assistants, was applicable to anyone whether a shop assistant or not. He could not help thinking that this was the sort of legislation which made it necessary for the education authority to supply school children with free meals. Then under Clause 10 there were provisions and obligations put upon shopkeepers of the most harassing character. It was laid down that a person must not be employed in or about a shop for more than sixty hours, including meal times, in any one week. The words used were "a person" so that not even the proprietor or his wife or children could be so employed. It was not provided that the person must be an assistant or a salaried servant. Moreover it was provided that a person employed in or about a shop must be allowed not less than one hour between twelve o'clock (noon) and two o'clock p.m. for dinner. How that would suit the proprietor of a luncheon bar or the proprietor of a ham and beef shop everyone knew. A similar vexatious condition was imposed in regard to the afternoon meal. A person employed, not necessarily a salaried assistant, even though a member of the employer's family, must have half-an-hour between four and seven o'clock in the afternoon for tea. The effect of that would be the closing of half the tea shops in London or a duplication of their staffs. Legislation of this kind might be all very well for factories and workshops, but it was unsuitable for ordinary shops. Clause 11 provided that a person under the age of eighteen years, or a woman, who was employed in a factory or workshop, must not, subsequently on the same day, be employed in or about a shop for such a period as would make the total period of employment exceed the number of hours permitted by the Factory Acts. What could be more vexatious? Under that no member of the shopkeeper's family would be permitted after the shop had been closed to go down even to "tidy up" and prepare for the work of next day. One of the most oppressive regulations required that in shops where persons of both sexes were employed, or were intended to be employed to-morrow, or next month, or next year, or at any time, proper separate sanitary conveniences must be provided for persons of each sex. [AN HON. MEMBER: Why not?] If a small shopkeeper employed his sons and his daughters he must provide two separate w.c's., although if they resided in a house which was not a shop one w.c. would be regarded as sufficient. If a man employed one female assistant and one male assistant he was to be compelled to provide a separate w.c. for each, although if that person employed in his house six female servants, and a butler, and other male servants, he need only provide one. A man who employed six female assistants in his shop would have to provide one w.c., but, if in addition he employed an errand boy, then he must send for the plumber and go to the further expense of providing a further w.c. for him. In many cases it would be impossible for small shopkeepers to carry out these requirements, and the employment of one or the other sex would have to be abandoned, and when that alternative arose, as everyone knew, it was invariably the weaker that went to the wall. He thought that this Bill, however good might be the objects of those who introduced it, would be mischievous in its operation, and do no more to promote the objects they had at heart than the present Act, which was admitted on all hands to be a failure. With regard to the principles of the Bill itself he could have wished that the Government had taken a plainer, and, if he might say so, a franker attitude in the matter. He would have liked to have heard from the Government benches an assurance somewhat on the lines of the old traditions of the Liberal Party in some such words as those spoken by a great Liberal statesman—

"If there be any party which is more pledged than another to resist a policy of restrictive legislation, having for its object social coercion, that party is the Liberal Party. The proud title which it has assumed proclaims the principle on which it is founded to be that of liberty. Liberty does not consist in making others do what you think right. The difference between a free Government and a Government which is not free is principally this, that a Government which is not free interferes with everything it can, and a free Government interferes with nothing except what it must. A despotic Government tries to make everybody do what it wishes. It is this practice of allowing one set of people to dictate to another set of people what they shall do, what they shall think, what they shall drink, when they shall go to bed, what they shall buy and whether they shall buy it, what wages they shall get and how they shall spend them, against which the Liberal Party have always protested. We have limited the Crown, we have limited the aristocracy, and depend upon it if liberty is to be secured a democratic House of Commons must know how to limit itself."

Those words were spoken by the late Sir William Harcourt, and he commended them to the consideration of hon. Gentlemen opposite. He hoped—or rather he wished—that they would give heed to them. He begged to move the Motion standing in his name.

SIR FRANCIS POWELL (Wigan) rose for the purpose of seconding the Motion, when

SIR FRANCIS LOWE (Birmingham, Edgbaston) called attention to the fact that forty Members were not present.

House counted; and forty Members being found present,

*SIR FRANCIS POWELL said that, in seconding this Motion, he hoped he might be allowed to occupy the attention of the House for a few moments because of the interest he had taken in this subject ever since 1892, when a similar measure was referred to a Committee of this House. He felt some regret that the Act of 1904 should have been condemned as a failure. Its condemnation in the course of that debate had been of a most wholesale and indiscriminate character. It did not follow because an Act as a whole was a failure that every part of it was a failure. Of one thing he was quite sure, and that was that when future legislation took place upon this subject a great part of the Act of 1904 would be rehabilitated, and still remain the law of the land. The great difficulty of that Act appeared to be the provision of justification. That provision was strongly insisted upon by the late Sir Blundell Maple, a well-known Member of the House for many years. It was to be regretted that he was not still a Member of the House, and still able to defend his proposal, which he would no doubt have been able to do with the same great ability and full knowledge which he displayed in 1904. Coming to the Bill itself he greatly regretted the change in the structure of the Bill from that of the Act of 1904, inasmuch as the form of that Act was optional, while that of the Bill as printed was compulsory. He himself had a very great belief in optional legislation, in adoptive Acts. With regard to some questions he thought they had been very successful. Let them take, for instance, the Act for the notification of infectious diseases. The proposal was made first of all in local Acts, and was adopted by local authorities. Then came an optional adoptive Act, which was the effort of the Conservative Government of the day. Then, finally, when it was found that the country was so universally in favour of its provisions that there were only comparatively few outstanding local authorities who did not adopt it, a Bill was introduced which he had the honour of carrying through Parliament, making the notification of infectious diseases universally compulsory. At first it would have been impossible to pass such an Act, but as that Act was put into operation its popularity increased until he believed there was nobody who objected to have the law extended over the whole of the country. He himself believed that local option in one form or another was the true mode of procedure in this case. The conditions of different districts varied so much, the circumstances were so diverse, the temperament of the people so widely separated in one county as compared as with another, that he believed the optional course was the only true one. It was the only one which would succeed, and he believed that the policy of universal compulsion would prove to be a failure. It would be a failure because it was so unpopular in some districts, or because in order to save the Act from unpopularity its framers would be compelled to draw it on so limited a scale as to make it absolutely useless. There was another contrast between the Act of 1904 and the present Bill, which he thought proved that at any rate in that detail the Act was far better than the Bill. The Act of 1904 recognised the difference which existed in different parts of the same area, and the provision of that Act was that restrictions might be in operation in one part of the district only and not in another, that they might not be the same over the whole area, and when they considered how large some areas were it would, he thought, be found quite necessary to break them up into districts so far as regarded the details of administration. How could they have the same regulation as regarded shops in a country district, thinly populated, as prevailed in a large town? One recommendation of the Bill was that the areas were large, but he found, comparing the Act of 1904 with the Bill, that the area of the Act was 20,000 and that under the Bill was 5,000, and that surely proved that the suggestion of having a wide area had been shrunk from by the promoters, and did not form part of their legislation. There was a great distinction, which had not yet been mentioned, in the definition of shops. The shop under the Act of 1904 was a retail shop, but the shop under the present Bill was also a wholesale shop. A shop in which retail business was done and an enterprise for carrying out wholesale business were entirely different. The whole scheme of operations was different. Then he would refer to the question of hours. He believed the hours proposed by the Bill would prove annoying and vexatious. He was in favour of a half-day holiday; he believed it was essential to the shopkeeping community, and that when they secured to them a long half-day holiday the same severity as to the closing hours was not necessary. There was one provision in the Bill to which he thought public attention should be directed, and that was the latest hour at which a shop could remain open—viz., ten o'clock in the evening. He was not quite sure whether the working-classes, who had their weekly marketing to do, would be satisfied by the closing of shops at ten. He would rather some member of the Labour Party expressed their opinion on that subject, because it seemed to him from his observation and knowledge that closing a shop at ten o'clock would be a very real hardship to ordinary prudent members of the wage-earning class. Some reference had been made by the Home Secretary to children under fourteen years; he (Sir Francis Powell) confessed that he held a very strong opinion on that subject, and he thought that fourteen years was too late a year. In the Act of 1904 they might by regulation allow a young person to be employed at the age of fourteen years, but in the Bill they did not allow it, and he believed that would inflict a very great hardship. Many young people, particularly boys, were employed in useful avocations of an easy and simple character before they were fourteen years of age. He believed that employment of that character, which was not injurious to health, and conducted under favourable conditions, was a benefit to the boy and not an evil. It occupied some of his time, which would otherwise be wasted, and gave him discipline, which he possibly greatly needed. It gave him a sense of responsibility. And he thought there was another reason. It gave him a sense of pride at doing something to assist his father and mother in the hard battle of life. As regarded the age between twelve and fourteen, in many cases boys and girls left school at twelve, and they were not to be allowed under the Bill to be employed in or about a shop till fourteen. He believed that educationists were of opinion that the age between twelve and fourteen was one of the most difficult ages in the period of youth. He remembered many years ago when in America he was in a large school, and the master pointed to boys of the age from twelve to fourteen and said they were his difficulty; they were old enough to know that he could not hurt them by any punishment which he could inflict; but they were not old enough to have acquired a sense of manly responsibility. He thought that that was a wise saying on the part of the schoolmaster. He knew that in this country there was anxiety as regarded children of that age, and he felt it to be a very great wrong and a great harm to them to expose them, particularly the girls, to the perils and dangers of city life at that time. Some allusion had been made to small shops, and he would not say much on that subject, because he thought it had been sufficiently dealt with. He would, however, just say that many of those small shops only differed very slightly from ordinary dwellings. In his own borough there was often one room devoted to some little simple retail trade, and the rest of the house was occupied by the family in the ordinary course. He thought, himself, that to bring to bear the whole legislation of the State on a simple trade of that kind was really unnecessary and vexatious. Then there were one or two points in the Bill which appeared to him—he did not know whether hon. Members would agree with him or not—to show a certain carelessness in drafting. The law as it now stood exempted from the legislation sales for charitable purposes, but this Bill, so far as he could understand it, brought all its machinery to bear on sales conducted for that purpose. There was a provision in the Act of 1904, or in preceding Acts incorporated with it, which exempted an employer who had done his best to secure obedience to the law, but there was no such provisions in the Bill, and there was another provision where a tradesman might exempt himself when he had taken proper care as regarded the actual offender. The regulations as to meals had been dealt with by a preceding speaker, and he thought anyone who considered the question, having regard to the small shop, would agree that the regulations affecting meals, which were good for factories and workshops, were inconvenient as regarded shops. The factory or workshop was, as they knew, deserted and silent during meal hours, but the work in a shop was continuous, and many difficulties must arise in connection with the meal hours, which he was sure had not been sufficiently considered by the promoters of the Bill. He did not wish to say more than a word with regard to restrictions on freedom, but he believed they had advanced very near the point where liberty was imperilled. He heard Mr. Gladstone on several occasions speaking in the House and warning them against interference with liberty. He quite agreed—as his action during many years had shown—that there were cases where liberty must be interfered with, either for the good of the community or the benefit of the individual, but he ventured to say, and he thought the assertion could not be too strongly made, that the burden of proof when liberty was interfered with should rest with those who made the interference. There was a feeling which he regretted, perhaps owing to the undue extension of sympathy with the weak, that any words of caution, any words advising care, any words in favour of liberty, came from, he would not say any evil motive, but that they placed the person who made those remarks under suspicion. Those suspicions were in many cases most unworthy, and he hoped he would not be deemed to be taking an undue liberty with the House if in his concluding words he uttered one word on behalf of liberty and made an exhortation to the House to take heed what steps they were taking. He thought it was only due to himself to say that he did not oppose the principle of the Bill. He supported the Act of 1904 and took some part in those debates, and he did not shrink to-day from the part which he then played, but he did say that the machinery for a Bill of this kind required the greatest care and most minute thought, and they must take heed lest in a reckless endeavour to benefit the community they hampered and inconvenienced the operations of commerce or interfered in a way which they could not forsee with the industries of the country. He seconded the Motion.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day six months.'"—(*Mr. H. H. Marks.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

MR. SUMMERBELL (Sunderland) said that, like the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down, he agreed with the principle of the Bill, but he was not going to take up the same attitude. He thought there was sufficient in the Bill, at all events, to warrant the assertion that it ought to go to a Committee, where any defects in it could be put right. To talk about the liberty of the subject was to his mind altogether foreign to the question. If they took up that attitude, they would arrive at the conclusion that every Act of Parliament interfered with the liberty of the subject. It was because of the want of liberty of shop assistants that he rose to say a few words in support of the Bill. He had deputationised large numbers of shopkeepers with a view to getting shorter hours, and directly they got a number of shopkeepers to agree to early closing, one or two held out, and their attitude was given as the reason for not falling into line and giving shop assistants shorter hours. That was the experience of everyone who had taken an interest in the question. If there were to be shorter hours for shop assistants, they would have to make it compulsory for all shops to close at a certain time on each day of the week. A short time ago a large number of female employees in an arcade in his town pointed out the number of hours they worked in a week, and that they went home in the early hours on a Sunday morning. It was certainly not creditable to the nation that girls and young people should be employed such long hours, and something ought to be done to put a stop to it. This Bill made that attempt. It said that shop assistants should not work longer than sixty hours a week. He thought that that was quite long enough, and that the Bill ought to have the support of every Memberw ho believed in fair play, so far as these employees were concerned. The Bill said that there should be a half-day's holiday each week. Attempts had been made for years, and had in some towns failed, to get a half-day's holiday for employees in shops. In nine cases out of ten probably it was just because one or two shopkeepers refused to comply that the whole thing fell through. Attempts had been made under the Act of 1904 to get a half day's holiday each week for certain sections of employees. The Bill was optional, and when it came for the council to issue an Order to close the shops, they found that the number agreeing had fallen below the requsite limit. This Bill was going to make it compulsory. Unless they took up that attitude, it would be utterly impossible to get early closing of shops. With regard to the restriction of hours of purchase, he pointed out that, if they opened shops on Sundays, they would find people would do their purchasing on Sundays instead of on Saturdays or some other day in the week. That was no argument why this Bill should not receive the consideration of the House, and be allowed to go to a Committee. He hoped the House would not, because the Bill had sundry defects, reject it, but that they would allow it to go to a Committee, because he felt sure they would get sufficient material out of it to make a good measure and be able to give shop assistants shorter hours, particularly on Saturdays, and half a day's holiday in each week. People often asked why employees did not go to church. If they asked a shop assistant, he would tell them that it was simply because he did not get home when his employer did. He therefore hoped the House would give better consideration to the measure than that indicated by the Home Secretary.

SIR F. BANBURY said the hon. Member for Sunderland was apparently not very much enamoured of the details of the Bill, though he was in favour of its principle because it contained the two words "compulsory" and "shall." It was very extraordinary that the party of progress—the Radical Party—should attach no importance to an Act of Parliament unless those two words were in it. He called that the very reverse of freedom. He objected to the Bill because it had those two words in it. He held that every adult Englishman should have the right to do what he liked with his labour, and it should not be regulated by anyone else, however well meaning. The hon. Member for Sunderland had laid great stress upon the failure of the Act of 1904, and had given them his experience in the Trades Council in the city he represented, stating that the attempt to gain a half-day's holiday was always frustrated by the fact that one shopkeeper objected. He thought the hon. Gentleman could not have read the Act of 1904, because it provided that there must be a three-fourths majority. Therefore one shopkeeper could not frustrate such an attempt. There must be a considerable number objecting. He did not think, therefore, that that was a very valid argument to have brought forward. He quite appreciated the reason why the Home Secretary was unable to be present. The right hon. Gentleman had addressed a few remarks to him and it would be discourteous if he did not say a few words in answer. The Home Secretary had said that this Bill would require prolonged discussion, and that he did not wish to say anything unfavourable to it, after which, however, he had proceeded to make a very eloquent attack on the measure, driving a coach and horses through it. The right hon. Gentleman completely smashed every clause in the Bill, and then wound up by saying that he was going to vote for it, not that he approved of it—because he could hardly say so after such a damaging speech against it—but for the reason that it affirmed in principle what he said last year. They all knew perfectly well that the right hon. Gentleman had never changed his view of that principle. What was the use of re-affirming what the right hon. Gentleman said last year? They, on that side of the House, were quite willing to take what the right hon. Gentleman had said last year as being what he meant to say, and as a statement to which he now adhered. Therefore, he saw no reason why the right hon. Gentleman should put this strain upon his conscience by voting for a Bill with which he did not agree, merely to re-affirm something he said last year. The right hon. Gentleman had put the question to him—Did he object to legislation dealing with long hours if it was proved that hundreds of thousands of people were suffering ill-health in consequence? That was a very large and vague proposition. He would like to know whether hon. Members contended that the populations of the cities and towns were not as healthy as they were formerly. ["And the villages"] He did not know whether the Under-Secretary implied that the populations of the villages were not as healthy as they were years ago. Perhaps he ought to include villages, but the Bill dealt mainly with the populations of cities and towns. The general statement was made that the health of the community was not so good in the cities and towns, and that was the reason why he had left out the villages. Would it be contended, then, that the health of the people in cities and towns was not what it was fifty years ago, when the hours worked were much longer than they were now?

MR. THORNE (West Ham, S.): The shops were healthier.

SIR F. BANBURY said that that was a very strong argument against sanitary legislation, because fifty years ago there was comparatively little of it. If the shops were healthier then than now, it only showed that all these regulations, these "compulsories" and "shalls," not only achieved the object of not making the shops so healthy as they were formerly, but of conferring salaries upon a large number of inspectors. He had rather thought that was the answer he would get. As a matter of fact long hours did not hurt anybody. Who were the most healthy people in the world? The Judges, who had worked the hardest and the longest hours during their life. He was not at all sure that Members of the House of Commons were not altogether fairly healthy. The question which the Home Secretary had asked him was therefore answered by the statement that he did not think there were any grounds for saying that long hours had caused any deterioration in the health of the population. He would go further and say that he attached so great importance to individual liberty and to the right of a man "to do what he liked" as long as he did not injure anybody else, that even if he was to go so far as to injure himself he would leave him the right to do what he liked with his own life. The right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean had stated that the London boroughs had had a meeting and passed what practically was a resolution in favour of his Bill.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE: That is putting it rather more strongly than I put it. I quoted the resolution and the amendment, and said that both the resolution and the amendment really asked for what I ask for on the second reading of the Bill. Of course they did not ask for details of this, or indeed of any Bill. They were against it, many of them.

SIR F. BANBURY quite agreed that to all interests and purposes the amendments really did ask for some alteration in the existing law which was more or less in the direction of this particular Bill. But he wanted to know what business it was of the London boroughs. They were composed of a certain number of people who were elected by the ratepayers. The ratepayers represented all classes. He would say that the proportion of votes given to each councillor by the shopkeepers was as large as the number of votes given by the customers of the shopkeepers, and therefore what it really came to was that the customers and employees of the shopkeeper were, through their representatives on the borough council, telling the shopkeeper how he ought to conduct his business. It was no business of the borough councils to interfere in other people's business.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE: It is under the Act which was supported by my hon. friend. The borough councils of the Metropolis are to make Orders.

SIR F. BANBURY said he begged to correct that statement. He did not support the Act. What he did was to vote against the Amendment of his right hon. friend, because it was so bad that, though it meant passing the Act, the Act itself was nothing like as bad as his right hon. friend's Amendment. He told the Under-Secretary for the Home Department he was surprised that a Conservative Government should introduce such a Bill. He could not go further than that. In regard to the fact that the London boroughs were asked to do such things, they were not asked to say whether the Act should be extended. As long as they were given a certain Act to administer, they had to administer it, but they had no business to go outside their province, which was to perform the work given them, and not point out to other people how they should carry on their private affairs. In addition to that he did not know what experience the ordinary borough councillor had of carrying on a shop. He might be a shopkeeper or he might not, but the majority of them could have no experience of how that business should be carried on. In fact it was an exemplification of the mania which was unfortunately spreading all over the country, that instead of minding their own business, they were to interfere with other people's, and, worse than that, to appoint State officials to meddle with other people's business. To his mind that was a subversion of all the principles that used to animate Englishmen, and was going back to the old bureaucratic principle which used to obtain in foreign countries and which they, as Englishmen, were so proud to say, thirty or forty years ago, did not apply to England. The right hon. Baronet had said that he was quite certain the Bill would not pass through both Houses without Amendments. He agreed. He did not think it would. There was no doubt about that. The right hon. Baronet went on to say that because it would not pass through without amendment, there was no reason why they should vote against the Second Reading. He thought there was very good reason. He quite understood the right hon. Baronet's position. He had brought in a Bill which he did not expect to carry and had asked for a great deal more than he really wanted.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE: I ask for more than the least I will take, not for more than I want.

SIR F. BANBURY said that that was not an unusual thing. If a man had something to sell he asked more than he was prepared to take because he thought a compromise might be made. The right hon. Baronet was very clever in Parliamentary procedure: he brought in a Bill which a great many people would think was bad and said the details could be altered so that when it came out of Committee it would not be half as bad as it was now. That was all very well, but he had had a good deal of experience of the House, and he was afraid that when a Bill got into Committee it was very difficult to alter the details. If it was committed to a Committee upstairs it was difficult to get an attendance, and things went through in a somewhat slipshod and haphazard manner, and when the Bill returned to the House it was very difficult to get it altered. He did not think it was an argument in favour of the Bill that there were so many details in it which required amendment that they should pass the Second Reading. If ever he had to bring in a Bill he would rather advance the argument that it was so good and required so little amendment that it would be impossible for anyone to object to it on the Second Reading. With regard to the Act of 1904, he thought that was a bad Act because it did, he admitted, interfere to a certain extent, with the freedom of the subject. It was a very different measure from this, because it gave shopkeepers the right to settle amongst themselves by a majority what should be done. This Bill did nothing of the sort. It gave local authorities the power, irrespective of the wishes and feelings of the shopkeepers, to do certain things, and, as he had already stated, the local authority was elected by all sorts of people, and the influence of the shopkeepers on the election of local authorities could not be of very great weight. He had always opposed this legislation, ever since he came into the House sixteen years ago, and he opposed it to the best of his ability in 1904 when introduced by the Government of which he was a supporter. They were then told that it was only one or two amongst the shopkeepers who objected to the Bill, and that the majority were in favour of it. When he went down to Peckham at his last election he found a certain number of small shopkeepers who were going to vote against him. He was told that he had better go and see a certain small shopkeeper who was the leader of the movement. He found he was out, and his wife was very uncivil. She would hardly speak to him. He got her to say what the reason was, and it was that he was in favour of a Bill of this sort, and nothing would induce her to believe that he had not been all through his Parliamentary career a strong supporter of the right hon. Baronet, and though he endeavoured to send her papers and various other things to prove that he was correct and she was wrong, she had seen it somewhere in the newspaper and would not change her opinion. That was an illustration that a very large number of shopkeepers were against the Bill. Where the right hon. Baronet had made a mistake was that he had classified all shops in the same way. He did not doubt that a big shop might very well get on if it did not employ all its assistants more than sixty hours a week. He wanted to show the great difference there was between classes of shops. There was the big prosperous shop with fifty or one hundred assistants carrying on a large business probably between reasonable hours, and then there was the small shopkeeper, and in the part of London which he used to represent there was a large number of them, and all round London, in all the outlying boroughs—Camberwell, Newington, and Islington—there was a large number of these people who practically lived upon the crumbs that fell from the table of the rich shopkeeper. These people only sold their goods at a time when the big shop was closed. It could not be said that long hours injured them. They had a small house, and the ground floor was turned into a shop. There was a parlour at the back with a glass door, and a bell rang when a customer went in. If they liked to pass their lives in that kind of way it could not be contended that there was any injury to their health in their doing so. At the time they were making their money and selling their goods there came this Bill which said, "You are to be closed too, and you are not to carry on your business." He held that that would mean the ruin of a very large number of these people. He could not conceive how any Member who had represented the class of constituency that he used to represent could give a vote in favour of this Bill. It was all very well to say it could be amended in Committee. He would sooner see the Bill brought back next year or re-introduced in a different form so that on the Second Reading they really knew what they were voting for, and not vote for something which had in it extremely mischievous provisions which might or might not be deleted during Committee. The London County Council were to be the authority. He did not want to say anything against the County Council. It was a most excellent body, especially at the present moment. But he wanted to know what experience the London County Council had, say, of Islington or Peckham. The member for Islington on the London County Council might have some experience of Islington, and the member for Peckham might have some experience of Peckham, but the member for St. George's, Hanover Square, had no experience of either, and yet his vote was to be as good as the vote of the member for Peckham or Islington. It was absurd to suppose that the London County Council could in any way exercise a proper control or carry out the proper administration of the Bill. Of course, it might be answered that the London County Council had not really a large option in the matter, because the Bill compelled them to close all shops on certain days and at certain hours, and to say that no shop assistant was to work more than sixty hours a week. There was one good provision in the Bill which enabled the London County Council or any other local authority to call a meeting if it thought fit, although he gathered there was an obligation to do so. It was said that they might call a meeting of ratepayers, but it would be difficult to call a meeting of the whole of the ratepayers of London, for instance, and in the case of London somebody had suggested a meeting in Hyde Park. If the ratepayers once negatived the proposal then the whole thing dropped. That, as far as he could see, was the only good point in the Bill. They had been told that sixty hours was long enough time to work. He would remind the House that they had another Bill limiting the working hours to eight per day. How would hon. Members like it if it was proposed that the consumers of coal should have the power of regulating the hours of miners. Under this Bill the customers of shops were to be allowed to dictate to the shopkeepers how long they were to keep their shops open. He had received a a letter from the Shopkeepers and Small Traders Protection Association who were strongly opposed to the Bill. One or two other trade associations had also approached him expressing their opposition to the Bill. There was a provision dealing with Sunday closing, but that was a question which had nothing to do with the hours, and ought not to be introduced in a measure of this kind. In the schedule amongst the exemptions there appeared "refreshments for consumption on the premises." What did that mean? Was the local authority going to be allowed to make an Order saying that all shops were to be closed on a certain day at a certain time? Were such traders as grocers, provision dealers, dressmakers, and tailors all going to be put in a bag and shaken up together, and made to close at a fixed time? What was the difference between buying an apple and eating it in the shop or outside? If it was wrong and unhealthy for an assistant to sell hardware, why was it not wrong and unhealthy for a person to sell matches and tobacco, for more than sixty hours per week? Why was a person to be allowed to sell a newspaper and not a book during certain hours? He hoped the Press would not take it amiss if he ventured to say that they could get equally valuable information sometimes from a book as from a newspaper. For what reason was a fresh fig to be sold at hours when a dried fig could not be obtained? Strangest of all, in view of the debate during the week, was the exemption of intoxicating liquors. The Party opposite claimed to be animated by the highest possible motives, and a desire to remove all the harrowing evils of the drink. They wished the wicked brewer to perish, although sometimes he was a member of the Government. And yet, when the opportunity occurred, when one would have thought they would have come forward and suggested that public-houses should not be open more than thirty hours per week, they actually provided in this Bill that the sale of intoxicating liquors should be exempted. How could hon. Members opposite consistently vote for this measure and the Licensing Bill? In one of these measures they were proposing to put a stop to the sale of intoxicating liquors, and in the other they were doing all they could to encourage it. That fact ought to cause serious reflection upon the part of hon. Members opposite. They had heard a great deal about opportunities being given to people to rise in life. Small shopkeepers had often risen to be great and successful tradesmen and men of large fortune, but they had only done this by working hard, and for long hours. These hard-working men were the backbone of the country. They did far more good for the country than the people who said, "I cannot work more than so many hours," and were always tired. All those privileges were now to be taken away. He thought that, in the interests of the nation, those classes should be protected. Then there was a curious provision about sanitary appliances. Many small shops were simply small houses with the front parlour turned into a shop.

MR. DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN (Mr. CALDWELL, Lanarkshire, Mid.): I must point out to the hon. Baronet that the details he is now raising are points for the Committee stage and not for the Second Reading.

SIR F. BANBURY said that it was the custom to pass so many details without adequate consideration that he had deemed it necessary to allude to some of them. He did not think there was a ghost of a chance of the Bill passing into law this session, although it might pass the Second Reading and go to a Committee. He opposed the Second Reading because he thought the principle of the Bill was wrong. They ought not to lead people to believe that it was the duty of Parliament to interfere in any way with their businesses, and by pursuing such a policy they would be sure to lose the respect of the country to a very great degree. He thought that was one of the reasons why hon. Members opposite had not been so successful at the by-elections recently as they were a few years ago. Of course they would all like to work less hours. Those employed in all trades were ready to agree to work shorter hours if they could only get the same wages. That, however, was no argument for passing legislation which would prevent legitimate trading, and prevent those who desired to work more than sixty hours per week from doing so. The principle was a wrong one, and nothing whatever had been adduced in its favour except the statement that some assistants would like to work shorter hours. How were we to compete with foreign countries if the House curtailed the hours of labour in this way? To accept a Bill of this sort would be a retrograde step, for it would not only do harm to the shopkeeper, but would affect injuriously the industry of the country.

MR. SCOTT (Ashton-under-Lyne) said that to listen to the hon. Baronet one would think that he had forgotten all the factory legislation that had been passed. The factor of foreign competition did not enter into this question at all, and yet in shops the longest possible hours were worked. This Bill was not brought forward entirely in the interests of the shopkeepers, but it was intended to have due regard for those who were employed long hours and who worked under conditions which were not always the best. They had been told that this measure would be looked upon as the forerunner of further legislation in the direction of interfering with businesses. He wished to point out that if this Bill became law, and it did not receive the sympathy and support of the country generally it would never be put into operation. It had to be put into force with the consent of the local authorities and the local representatives. He did not think there was any other hon. Member in the House than the hon. Baronet opposite who did not think that a sixty hours week was quite long enough for anybody to work. This measure did not affect in any way foreign competition; it was a matter entirely confined to the home country. Whenever legislation of this kind had been suggested in other directions they had always been told that they were subject to foreign competition, and that if they reduced the hours of labour by giving miners eight hours they would be unfairly handicapping the colliery owners in competition with Germany and France. Here was an industry which was carried on among ourselves, and into which foreign competition did not enter as it did in many other industries. It was absolutely free from foreign competition, and yet in this industry of all others they had the longest possible hours. The hon. Baronet had referred to those trades which were included in the

Schedule. He himself was not altogether in favour of those exemptions, but they were already in other Acts, and, that being so, those responsible for the drafting of this measure had simply adopted what had gone before. He hoped that the Under-Secretary for the Home Department would give to those who were looking for some amelioration in the conditions of shop assistants a definite promise that the Government, if they could not support this Bill, would bring forward one of their own next year dealing with the hours of labour in shops. Those who desired a curtailment of the hours of labour in connection with railway employment recognised that there were certain isolated signal-boxes where only one or two trains a day passed, and they did not expect that the same restrictions should be applied in those cases as where the traffic was great. Those were questions of detail and arrangement which did not affect the real principle at issue. Those who voted for the Bill would not be committed to every line in it; they would merely vote for the general principle that it was desirable to do something to improve the conditions of shop assistants. He believed that the vast majority of the House would readily go into the lobby and vote for the principle of the Bill.

SIR F. CAWLEY (Lancashire, Prestwich) said he was rather in favour of giving considerable powers to municipalities and not taking those powers away as the Bill proposed and placing them in the hands of a central authority. His hon. friend wanted the Government to promise to do more than they had done. His own opinion was that the Government had promised quite enough. He was not in favour of the Government of which he was a supporter always promising everything to everyone who asked for it, because it was conceivable that it might get them into considerable trouble. If anything, he rather deprecated their being asked to promise to bring in a Bill next year. His hon. friend represented Ashton-under-Lyne. He himself represented a constituency which lay north of Manchester, between that city and Ashton-under-Lyne and Stalybridge. There were no municipalities in that constituency, but they were all populous urban districts and the people possessed great intelligence. Large industries were carried on, but there were no large shops; they were all small businesses. A great many of his constituents kept those small shops, and had been very much injured by the system of tramways running to the large towns and taking the people away from the small shops. He quite understood his hon. friend wishing his constituents to go and shop in his constituency. He would rather see his constituents do their shopping in their own districts. If the Bill were passed it would practically ruin half the small shopkeepers in his and other constituencies. He was not against many clauses in the Bill, but he was against it as it stood. The incongruities it contained were so great that he could not support it. The House ought to reject it because it would impose too great a tax upon the small shopkeeper.

MR. FELL (Great Yarmouth) said they had been told that the life of shop assistants was an extremely unhealthy one, and that the percentage of pulmonary diseases among them was larger than among those engaged in any other occupation. Those who used this argument had not gone far enough into figures. They had not shown in what particular trades those diseases were most prevalent. In many of the large emporiums in this country where hundreds of assistants were employed the provisions proposed to be enacted by this Bill already obtained. The hours in those places were not longer than those prescribed by the Bill, and yet the pulmonary diseases were larger there than in very small country shops where only one or two assistants were employed. If that was so, what would be the tendency of the Bill if it became law? There was no doubt that it would strike a blow at the small country shops which, he supposed, were ten times greater in number than those of large companies which had shops in various places. It was on behalf of the small shopkeepers that he objected to the provisions of the Bill, for he believed that there was no more healthy occupation than that of attending to small shops." No one could say that it was hard work, and, although the hours might be long, the assistants during a great part of the time were not working. In village shops they might sometimes find a child attending to customers while the mother was in a back room performing other duties, and he did not think the provisions of the Bill should be applied in such cases. He believed that young men who were confined in shops did suffer from want of air and exercise, but the Bill was not going to touch the places where they were employed. It would touch coffee stalls and stalls in market places, and it would touch the little shops where cobblers and barbers carried on their businesses. He could not see why such shops should come within the scope of the Bill. Was it really intended that the Bill should apply to the tens of thousands of small shops in villages all over the country? He believed that if they analysed the trades in which pulmonary and other diseases prevailed they would get some valuable information. He believed that it would be found that anæmic girls and those who suffered from complaints resulting from their occupations were employed in large drapery shops which this Bill would not touch because the owners had already the proposed provisions in force. The ill-health of the assistants was due to the particles which got into the atmosphere through the tearing of the materials amongst which they worked. If they could have legislation to stop the tearing of materials which gave off deleterious particles, it might have a beneficial effect on the health of the assistants, but he deprecated the placing of restrictions of the kind proposed on young people who wanted to get on in the world. Where were they to get their Edisons, and people of that sort, if they passed such a Bill as this? Was Edison brought up in a place where he could not serve more than a certain number of hours? Let them read the life of any great man and see whether he was restricted to sixty hours per week with a dinner hour in the middle of the day provided for by Act of Parliament. The Bill if passed would interfere with the rights of people who wished to do the best they could for themselves. How could poor widows who kept shops be brought within the provisions of the Bill? He represented a good many country shopkeepers and he was perfectly sure that he had their authority when he said that they did not want this Bill.

Mr. SEDDON (Lancashire, Newton) said that after listening to the speech of the hon. Member for Great Yarmouth he thought that never in the history of Parliament were truer words used than those which were uttered by the late Lord Salisbury, when, on 26th February, 1901, he said—

> "This is one of the cases in which the two Houses of Parliament occupy a somewhat difficult position. They are asked to legislate as to matters affecting the personal happiness and well-being of a very large number of persons—a very large class—to which, with scarcely an exception, the Members of the two Houses do not themselves belong."

It had been said that in small grocers' shops the assistants did not work long hours. Having himself had the opportunity of working in a small grocer's shop he would like to put this question: What were long hours? As a boy of thirteen, in the shop where he was employed, he commenced to work at 7 o'clock in the morning and finished at 9 o'clock at night except on Saturday when he worked until 11 o'clock, and he would have been kept longer if his employer had not had a licence, but the shop could not be kept open longer by law. It was the hours he stole from sleep that helped him to furnish his mind, which certainly was not sufficiently furnished at an age when many hon. Gentleman were thinking of going to college instead of going to work. All the comments made on this Bill had been made on hypothetical cases and chiefly with respect to the poor widow. He was getting about tired of the poor widow. He remembered that the poor widow was dragged in after the South African War when they were seeking for Chinese serfs. It was said that if they did not get these Chinese serfs the poor widows who had invested in South African mining shares would be ruined. There had been discussions in the newspapers about the Licensing Bill, and he found that the brewers had taken the poor widow under their care. It was only their consideration for the poor widow investor in brewery shares that induced them to oppose the Bill! The poor widow had played a part too long. He had met a great many employers, some of them most generous, but he had never found one who closed or kept open his shop because some widow lived in that particular neighbourhood. A case had been made out, by evidence which had not been given by interested persons, before five Royal Commissions and Committees that had sat upon this question, and all medical evidence proved that the long hours worked by shop assistants were most injurious to health, especially to the health of women, and the health of future generations, because the women were the potential mothers of our race. The experience of his own trade union in the City of Lincoln, which claimed to be a healthy city, and which contained a larger proportion of union members than any other town in the kingdom, was that during the last fifteen years every death among the members of the Society was due to consumption. That was a startling fact. The Home Secretary had made a speech out of harmony with the one he delivered last year. He admitted that towards the end of his speech the right hon. Gentleman manufactured a good many objections to some details in the Bill, that were more imagined than real. He agreed that the Bill was not perfect. There were many details in it that could be amended. Attending only last week an influential deputation representing every trade in the North of England he found that many of the members had taken their view of the Bill from the same source as the hon. Baronet the Member for the City of London. Some individual had been working up a case against the Bill in the interest of the small shopkeeper. But when he explained to them that the principle of the Bill was simply the limitation of the hours of shop assistants it was unanimously agreed that, if they could come together in conference round a table, they would be able to settle all differences in four or five hours. The right hon. Gentleman had promised a Bill for next year. Was he to understand that that Bill would provide for a limitation of hours and that sixty hours would be the maximum? And were they also to understand that with the limitation of hours for assistants there would be compulsory closing in various trades? He admitted that in seasonal trades the time of closing might be altered, but the union to which he belonged, and which represented 46,000 organised workers, insisted on the sixty hours' maximum as a principle from which they would not recede one iota. He had visited the House of Keys in the Isle of Man while it was discussing a Bill containing forty-six clauses for the inspection of workshops. There were some sharp divisions of opinion in regard to it, yet that Bill went through in six hours; and the reason was that the representatives went there to do things and not to waste time. He suggested that the Home Secretary might help the cause of the shop assistants, on whose behalf he spoke, by allowing a Second Reading of the Bill and sending it up to a Grand Committee, instead of their having to wait until next year for the Government measure. If the right hon. Gentleman did so he was sure that to his surprise all the difficulties would be overcome, and his time next session spared. He knew that there were some people who still supported Lord Avebury's Bill. He gave all credit to them for good intentions. They did not believe in compulsion but thought that a permissive measure would appeal to the generous instincts of the employers in the distributive trades and that they would all be willing to allow the measure to come into operation. All experience, however, proved that where Provisional Orders had been applied for, there had been no diminution of the hours of labour, and in many towns there had been no applications for an Order. Last year the Home Secretary admitted that there was only one city where the Act had been a success in any degree, the City of Glasgow. And yet only last week they had the assistants, male and female, not members of a union, coming out on strike, not for an increase of wages, but because their minimum hours of labour were seventy-nine per week, extending during the busy season to 100 hours, and in many cases to more when the shops were open on Sunday. That took place in the City of Glasgow, the Eldorado of short hours in shops! He asked hon. Gentlemen above the Gangway whether they did not think that seventy-nine hours was not too long for anyone to work in a shop? Surely they had arrived at a period when this House should step in and put a check on unscrupulous employers. He knew that there were good employers, but they were often made the victims of unscrupulous employers, who, forsooth, stood out for the great principle of individual liberty as advocated by the hon. Baronet the Member for the City of London. He looked upon the hon. Baronet as an amiable humourist, but he did not think that any vote would be influenced by anything which he said. They all knew how genial he was, although sometimes they wished him elsewhere. There seemed to be in the minds of some Gentlemen an idea that the public would suffer from the hours of shop assistants being curtailed, and that the shopkeepers themselves also would suffer. In New Zealand shop hours had been regulated by Acts of Parliament for years. In 1902 he wrote to the Labour Department in New Zealand asking if the curtailment of shop hours had been a hardship to the poorer classes, and whether any complaints had been made by the employers against the Act, and on what ground. The reply he received was that—

> "When the first Bill was introduced into New Zealand there were all sorts of prophecies of the ruin it would cause to shopkeepers, and the large shopkeepers threatened to cut down wages. Those threats had not been carried out, and the Act was now as much appreciated by the employers as it was by the employees."

That was the experience of all the Colonies which had tried the limitation of hours of shop assistants, especially in the case of women, whose hours were limited to fifty-five and a half per week, which were quite long enough. The hon. Member for Yarmouth had said that only in certain trades were shop assistants subject to influences which might injure health, and he had referred to the drapery trade where certain goods were sold which were dressed by poisonous preparations, the particles of which floated in the air and were absorbed by the assistants handling the goods. That was true. But he was inclined to disagree with the hon. Gentleman on another point. The hon. Gentleman seemed to think that that only occurred in the large shops in the West End of London, where the assistants worked less than sixty hours a week, because the people who dealt there only shopped in the forenoon or in the early afternoon. He would refer the hon. Gentleman to the co-operative movement which catered almost exclusively for the working classes, and in the North of England, where the co-operative movement had its greatest extension, the assistants in their shops only did forty-eight hours work per week. It was only through a bad custom that long hours were tolerated. The hon. Baronet the Member for the City of London had the happy knack of promoting thought by some of his remarks. He had said that the health of shop assistants in the distributive trades was worse now than fifty years ago. Certainly it was; and if the hon. Baronet had been more familiar with the distributive trades, he would have known that fifty years ago the great bulk of the shop assistants were boarded with the employer's family. They sat at the same table with them, and the employers became their guardians. That day was practically gone. Instead of there being individual employers with three to half a dozen assistants, there were now huge emporiums with 1,500 male and female assistants living in, and perhaps 5,000 altogether. It was in these large emporiums that there was the rush of business which caused the great deterioration in the health of the assistants. Let the hon. Gentleman listen to these hours, as detailed by an assistant only the other day—

> "I work from 7 a.m. till 9 p.m. on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday; from 7 a.m. till 10 p.m. on Thursday; from 7 a.m. till 12 midnight on Friday; and from 7 a.m. on Saturday till one or two on Sunday morning."

Colonel LOCKWOOD (Essex, Epping): Is that a man?

Mr. SEDDON said that that was a man. Surely the House ought to do something to protect the shop assistants from such hours of labour. He knew that in many large towns the hours would be reduced with the consent of the employers themselves. In the town in which he resided they had decent hours, and the best employers would be willing to reduce them further if it were not for the unscrupulous employers who would keep their assistants through all hours on Sunday morning, but for the church and chapel people to whom they were looking for orders. He maintained that in the interest of the public, of the employers, and of the employees alike, a case had been made out for the Bill; and he appealed to the Home Secretary to give the Bill a Second Reading, and allow it to go to a Grand Committee. He promised the right hon. Gentleman that he would do all he possibly could to facilitate its progress by a give-and-take policy, so that when it came to Third Reading it would not take up too much of the time of the Government. That would be a message of hope from the House to those who could not help themselves, but who were now the unfortunate victims of oppression.

Mr. HAROLD COX (Preston) said that the hon. Member who had just spoken supported a few weeks ago a Bill demanding the right to work. Now, he was supporting a Bill denying to people the right to work.

Mr. SEDDON: Beyond sixty hours a week.

Mr. HAROLD COX said that the hon. Member had told them that the principle of this Bill was that no one was to work for more than sixty hours a week. On looking at the Bill he found that the sixty hours included one-and-a-half hours each day for meals, but in the Factory Acts the sixty hours excluded the meal time. That was to say, a man might not engage in the light work, as it often was, of serving in a shop for more than sixty hours a week, including meal times, but he might engage in the heavy work of boiler-making or in a factory for sixty hours a week excluding meal times, a difference of about seven or eight hours a week.

An HON. MEMBER: That includes overtime.

Mr. HAROLD COX said that that was not so, and as a matter of fact he was under-stating his case, because there was no legal, or rather explicit, limit whatever upon a man's work in a factory. He quite recognised that in a textile factory, where they had a large number of women and children employed, if they made regulations limiting their hours, they did in fact limit the hours of men's work, but that was why he ventured some weeks ago, he was afraid permanently, to offend his friend the hon. Baronet the Member for the City of London, by saying that he did not dispute absolutely the power of Parliament to interfere even with the labour of adult males. He said that partly because he thought there would be a certain amount of hypocrisy in taking up that attitude. Let them take the case of what was known in Lancashire as the "Football Hour." Some years ago the Lancashire operatives wanted to close an hour earlier so as to be able to watch the football matches.

An HON. MEMBER: No, no.

Mr. HAROLD COX: Well, I speak from my own information.

An HON. MEMBER: I speak from experience.

Mr. HAROLD COX said that at any rate they wanted to close early. They did not ask Parliament to pass an Act limiting the hours of their labour, but to alter the provisions of the law affecting the hours of women and children, which indirectly benefited them, therefore it would be straining language to say that Parliament never did interfere with the hours of men. The point, however, was that hon. Members opposite were denying to their fellows the right to work sixty hours a week, whereas the vast majority of the people of this country worked for more than sixty hours a week.

An HON. MEMBER: That is the reason why so many of them have got no work.

Mr. HAROLD COX said that that raised a very interesting economic fallacy, and he would point out that if it were true that they could make more work for other people by working less time themselves, they could make more work still by not working at all. He might add that there would be work for all of them if none of them did any work. This Bill was inspired, he believed, by a desire to help the assistants in large shops. He believed that that was the only argument put forward in defence of it, but the hon. Members who prepared the Bill had forgotten that all shops were not large shops, that there was an enormous number of small shops, and that there was an increasing number of small shops. Although it was true, as the Socialists were fond of saying, that those small shopkeepers often lost their money, it was also true that a large number of them did earn an honest living year by year, maintaining themselves and their families, and those were the people that the authors of the Bill had absolutely forgotten. The effect of the Bill would be to destroy altogether a very large proportion of those shops, and thus to do what the Socialists always professed they did not want to do, viz., to drive industry into the hands of the big capitalists, because they would crush out the little man, which was the general effect of legislation such as that. With regard to the Act of 1904, it was very different. He agreed with the hon. Baronet opposite that the late Government did sometimes make mistakes, but the Act of 1904 was certainly a very different measure from the Bill now before the House. It required the local authority to be satisfied that two-thirds of the people concerned wished for the regulations, but there was nothing of that sort in the present Bill. The local authority was to have absolute power to impose regulations on the trade of the town, and he would like to point out the extraordinary manner in which the Bill was drafted. In the second clause the local authority was given power to fix the hour of closing on the early closing day at or before one o'clock, and there was nothing to prevent them fixing it at ten o'clock in the morning. Clause 4 said that under no circumstances was a shop assistant to be employed for more than half-an-hour from the closing hour unless notice was given (to the factory inspector, he presumed) seven days in advance. Let them take the case of an ordinary village shop where a man had two assistants and his family helping him. Supposing a barrel of sugar was upset on the floor late in the evening, and it took an hour to clear it up, he would be liable to a fine of £5. Many small shops were engaged in what he might call manufacturing as well as selling. They often had a plumber's shop where people were engaged in working at the back of the shop making things, and they were under no restrictions whatever. They could work all night long, but if one of those men was brought into the front shop, where he would probably sit on a stool doing nothing all day long, waiting for a customer, then he must not work more than sixty hours per week.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE: The man working in or for the shop, at "making, or preparing for sale," was in a workshop under the Factory Acts, and already got the benefit of the sanitary regulations.

MR. HAROLD COX said that that was perhaps one of the most humorous portions of the Bill. It would not escape the notice of the House that these sanitary regulations applied to any shop, small or great, and that any shopkeeper employing his own children was subjected to the provisions of the Bill. It required that wherever males and females were employed separate sanitary accommodation must be supplied for the two sexes, so that if a shopkeeper had a son and a daughter, both occasionally assisting him in the shop, he was to go to the expense of setting up separate sanitary accommodation for them. Then, with regard to children, the Bill said that no child under fourteen years of age was ever to be employed in a shop. But what did the Factory Act say? It allowed any child over twelve years of age to be employed as a half-timer in a factory. More than that, a child thirteen years of age who had passed the proper standard, could be employed full time. Did anybody pretend that the severity of the work in a factory was in any way comparable to the light work in a shop? The hon. Member who had just spoken had talked about people standing so many hours a day, and there were cases, he admitted, where that might occur, but there was also an enormous number of shops where the assistants were not standing all day long. Hon. Members themselves must often have been in shops where they found the woman in charge sitting comfortably in a chair, knitting or sewing. Were they to contend that that woman was in any way subject to the same kind of strain as she would be if she were working in a cotton mill? Then there was a curious point with regard to the meal-times. This highly ingenious Bill said that at least an hour was to be set aside between noon and two o'clock for meals, and the Bill applied to eating-houses as well as to other shops. That meant that an eating-house, which necessarily did its whole business in the middle of the day, was to send out its assistants for an hour at a time when they were doing their biggest business, and they would consequently lose their customers. He could not imagine a more absurd proposal. If people catered for other people's meals, they must arrange their meal-times so that they did not clash with the duty they had undertaken. If their servants formed a union and insisted in having their meals just at the time when they had contracted to supply meals to other people, they would be breaking their contract. People who took service in eating-houses did so with the distinct knowledge that they were going to supply meals in the middle of the day, and having made that undertaking, it was their business to take their own meals at some other time. It would be as reasonable for the soldier to say he wanted his holiday just when he was called to the front. The Bill, by the way, expressly applied to barbers, who were always busiest at meal-times, because all the people came out from their work at meal-times, had their food, and then went to get their hair cut, and then the barber and his assistants were all to go off and have their meals according to statute. There was another very interesting clause, viz., Clause 20, and he did not think that even the Members who were responsible for the Bill could possibly have read it themselves, for he could not believe that any Member of the House of Commons would put his name to the back of such a Bill if he had known what was in it. Clause 20 said that any person found in a shop, other than a customer, should, until the contrary was proved, be deemed to have been employed in the shop. If a woman had her niece to stay with her, and she was playing about in the shop, unless the aunt went to the expense of proving that she was not employed she would be liable under the Act.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE said that the clause followed the "presumption" clause of the Factory Act.

MR. HAROLD COX said he could only express his surprise that his right hon. friend, with his great ingenuity, did not exercise a little more discretion in copying other Acts.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE: It is a necessary provision.

MR. HAROLD COX said that if anything would condemn the Bill that clause alone would do it. There was a schedule of exceptions, but it only applied to the closing hours. It did not apply to the provisions about sanitary accommodation, or to children, or to meal-times. Let them look at the exceptions. There were medicines and surgical appliances, and establishments for consumption on the premises. That was all very well, but how were they to guarantee that the person who came ostensibly to eat on the premises did not take away food with him? There was another curious exception, and perhaps his right hon. friend defended that. One of the set of establishments which were not to be subject to the law so far as regarded hours were those for the supply of tobacco, pipes, matches, and smokers' necessaries. He knew his right hon. friend had a foolish precedent for every part of the Bill.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE said that his precedent was unanimously agreed to in the Shop Hours Act of 1904.

MR. HAROLD COX said that when it was unanimous it was often the most foolish. Not being a smoker, he could not see why this preferential treatment should be given. They were invited to pass a Bill which made it a penal offence for a child to smoke tobacco, and yet they were to give preferential treatment to the people who supplied the tobacco. Then, as to newspapers. Newspapers, and, so far as concerned railway bookstalls, annual magazines and books, were excepted. Hon. Members would know that recently there was a dispute between a well-known firm of newspaper suppliers and the London and North-Western Railway Company, with the result that that firm had set up shops outside the railway stations. Under this Bill, that firm would be restricted as to its hours, but its competitor just inside the station would have freedom to sell all day and all night.

An HON. MEMBER: That is free trade.

Mr. HAROLD COX said he called it preferentialism, and that was one of the reasons why he objected to protection.

*Sir CHARLES DILKE said these words were taken from the present law. The case had arisen in Glasgow.

Mr. HAROLD COX said he had always thought they had a great many foolish statutes in the Statute-Book, but until his right hon. friend interrupted him so frequently he did not know how many there were.

*Sir CHARLES DILKE said the hon. Member was quoting words as his words but they were the words of the existing law, and the point had arisen and was discussed by him that day in the composite shop case, when the hon. Member was not present.

Mr. HAROLD COX said he was present. With regard to Sunday closing, the Home Secretary had properly pointed out that the Bill made no provision for Jews. It permitted them to sell on Saturdays, but forbade them to sell on Sundays, whereupon the right hon. Member for the Forest of Dean said he was willing to waive the question of the Jews.

*Sir CHARLES DILKE: There is an exception in favour of Jews in the Factory Acts, and I said I would be willing to consider similar exceptions.

Mr. Harold Cox.

r. HAROLD COX said that as regarded the Factory and Workshops Act the thing did not matter very much, because a Jew could seldom get enough Jewish assistants to set up a rival factory, but in the case of shops it mattered a great deal. In the case of two shops working side by side, under this law, with the exception in favour of Jews, they would have a Jew permitted to trade on Sunday while the Christian was debarred from doing so. These were just a series of the futilities and absurdities of which the Bill was full, without troubling to consider the principle of the Bill—and he thought the House should remember that the principle as laid down by the hon. Member opposite was that no shop assistant had ever to work more than sixty hours a week, meal hours included, which meant considerably less than sixty hours a week. That was the principle they were to accept, that whereas men might work in factories and workshops as long as they liked, and women in non-textile factories sixty full hours a week, neither man nor woman was to work in a shop as much as sixty hours a week, their meal times having to be taken out of the sixty. That was the proposition they were asked to vote upon, and quite apart from that they had a Bill full of such grotesque anomalies that the House should not consider it for a minute.

Mr. JOHN WARD (Stoke-on-Trent) thought it interesting that he should refer to a little book he had in his hand published a few years ago by the hon. Member who last addressed the House. He supposed that of all the men sitting in that House, the present movement to reduce the hours of labour could be laid more upon the shoulders of the hon. Member for Preston than upon any other Member. He held in his hand a book published in 1888 entitled "The Eight Hours' Working Day," written by the hon. Member for Preston. At that time the Labour leaders were discussing whether it was right to enforce by personal arrangement, by means of strikes or otherwise, between their employers and themselves a shortening of the hours of labour in factories, mines, workshops, etc., and, in fact, in all classes of industrial work. They were debating among themselves as to whether it was possible to come to Parliament and seek a reduction of hours by legal enactment or whether they ought to settle the question personally between themselves and their employers. In the midst of their discussions came the memorable tract dealing with the situation, written by the hon. Member for Preston. In that he conclusively proved that it was a waste of energy on the part of labour combinations to attempt by means of strikes to shorten the hours of labour, but that it was their duty to come to the House of Commons, and to insist upon its being done by Parliament. One would scarcely believe that it was possible that that book could have been written a few short years ago by the hon. Member whose views met with such approval to-day from the hon. Baronet the Member for the City of London. But, while the hon. Member for Preston was quite entitled, as a justification for his present opinion, to point out that he wrote that pamphlet twenty years ago, that was no reason why the Labour leaders should alter their opinion. Having been convinced twenty years ago that this was the proper procedure they were not going to change their opinions now. In that book he could point to the case of the cab driver. The hon. Member to-day had referred to the case of the cab driver and had pointed out to those who had been pressing for an eight-hours day how ridiculous it would be to apply that system to cab drivers. He had suggested that a man in his cab might for half the day be looking for a fare and that when he got one he would not be allowed to drive him a mile or so because the legal limit of time during which he was allowed to work had expired. But in his book the hon. Member had dealt with that objection in a very scientific and practical way, and from that pamphlet they were able to take every point of his speech and answer every objection he now suggested. In fact, if the hon. Member read again his own book, he would find that no reply to his speech to-day was required from any Member on the Labour Benches.

*MR. STEADMAN (Finsbury, Central) said that he would not have intervened in the debate but for the fact that he had had some special experience in dealing with the hours of labour of shop assistants. The hon. Member for Preston was careful to analyse the Bill and to point out what were its defects, but he had not taken the trouble to inform the House of the good principles embodied in the Bill. Its good principles far outweighed its defects. For some years there had been in existence in London a combination known as the Voluntary Early Closing Association. That Voluntary Early Closing Association had in its way done some good in various parts of London to secure a half-holiday or an early closing afternoon in a great many shops. Working on behalf of that association in the East of London he had personally canvassed every drapery establishment in the Commercial, the Mile End, and Whitechapel Roads, and had succeeded in persuading the proprietors of some of those establishments to agree to close their premises a little earlier on one or two nights a week. In two or three instances he found that the proprietors had gone back on their agreements and were working the old hours. Upon his interviewing them they told him that other people (giving the names) were doing it and that, therefore, they were obliged to do it too, otherwise they would lose their custom. He did not hold the working classes entirely blameless in the matter and had often said that if the people refused to shop at night the shops would not keep open, and he formed a ladies' association and distributed handbills asking the working classes not to shop late. He interviewed during that period one of the largest firms in London and asked the head to close the establishment at two o'clock on Thursday afternoons. That gentleman admitted to him in the course of conversation that the present long hours of shop assistants meant slow murder, but as an argument against himself closing at two o'clock on Thursdays, he said that other large establishments in different parts of London did not close till five, and that if he closed at two the customers whom he was then getting in the afternoon would go to these other shops, and he would lose them. The only solution to the problem, he said, was a universal compulsory legal enactment by Parliament. The hon. Member for Preston had taunted his hon. friend because he was now supporting this Bill while a few weeks back he was supporting another Bill which claimed for every man out of work a right to work. But that was the position of the Labour Party. As trade unionists they believed that if they could secure a legal eight-hours working day for all those industries which were now working twelve or fourteen hours a day, they would be able to put into employment every working man who to-day was unemployed. Their efforts to-day were as much in the direction of securing equal employment for all as anything else. He himself had four daughters, and men occupying his position were not able to keep their daughters at home; they had to find some honest employment for them, and everyone must admit that the hours to-day in the shops were far too long for any female to engage in, and the wages were far too small. Before he was ten years old he went as an errand-boy, between his school hours, and at twelve years of age he had to leave school and devote his whole time and attention to his work. His hours were from seven in the morning till ten at night five nights a week, and till twelve on Saturday. One year after that he served behind the bar in the house of a relative. His hours there were from six in the morning till ten o'clock at night every day and on Saturday till twelve. How could they expect to educate people and make good citizens out of them if they were to work all those hours? He would like to see an Act of Parliament that would not permit a boy to go to work until he was fourteen years of age, but compelled his parents to keep him at school until he reached that age. He believed that if that were done a far better class of citizens would be brought up. He admitted that the Bill attacked the small shopkeepers. In the back streets of our poorer districts there were thousands of what were called chandlers' shops, which found it very difficult to make both ends meet, but which were very useful to the poor. Then there were the refreshment places, which he supposed would include fried fish shops. In East London, in which great interest was taken in this Bill, there were a great number of fried fish shops. Their business did not commence until after eight o'clock at night—their work did not commence till then. He could take hon. Members down to East London after that hour, and show them many of these shops crowded with people waiting to get served with fish for their suppers. These shops also would be hardly hit by this Bill. He would, in conclusion, point out that no Bill introduced in the House was perfect in the form in which it was first brought forward, and that being so he hoped the Government would agree to this Bill going to a Committee, so that in the Committee stage all those defects that had been pointed out could be remedied, and a great deal of good done by its passage into law.

*THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. HERBERT SAMUEL, Yorkshire, Cleveland): The House has heard many speeches from hon. Members opposite devoted not merely to the criticism of the details of this measure, but aimed against its very essence and principles. I shall be very much interested to see whether they will carry their objections and resistance to the Bill as far as the division lobby. On past occasions I have often noticed that the hon. Member for the City of London has not done so, but that when it came to voting his courage ran out of the heels of his boots. I hope he will on this occasion carry his opposition into the lobby in order that we may see what is really the position of this proposal in the House. That there is need of reform will hardly be denied by anybody. There was a Committee of the House of Lords in 1901 which considered this matter. That Committee, of which the late Lord Salisbury was a member, reported that the evidence had satisfied them that the subject was one of urgent importance and that—

> "The existing evils show no signs of immediate improvement. In many cases the hours during which these shops are open range as high as eighty or ninety a week."

This is not a statement of a trade union leader, but the considered Report of a Select Committee of the House of Lords—

> "In addition to these hours some time is occupied in cleaning up and putting away the goods not purchased. In many cases the hours amount to fourteen a day, and it is almost self-evident that such long hours of work are often ruinous to health, especially in the case of women."

There is little reason to believe that the conditions have been ameliorated to any appreciable degree during the seven years that have passed since that Committee reported. But even if these long hours did not involve a danger to health, there would be still a case for shortening them. The injury to physical health is not the only evil that results from these long hours. People tied to the counter for so many hours in the day have no opportunities for recreation, for self-improvement, for the duties of citizenship, or for any of the wider activities of life. This Parliament comes pledged, more than any other Parliament of recent years has done, to carry out measures of social reform, and we who are its Members have all of us told our constituents that we will do what in us lies to help to increase the happiness of the people. I do not think we can pass any legislation which is more consistent with those pledges than the giving to nearly a million of our people the inestimable boon of larger leisure, and for my part I shall be most bitterly disappointed if this Parliament comes to an end without an effective measure limiting the hours of labour in shops being placed on the Statute-book.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE: Limiting the hours of labour in shops meets our request, I think.

*MR. HERBERT SAMUEL: The main objection urged against this Bill has been stated in interesting language by the hon. Baronet opposite, the Member for the City of London, who puts it on the ground that it interferes with the liberty of the subject. I always listen to the hon. Baronet with the greatest possible attention. He told us in an interesting autobiographical statement that he was born in the middle of the nineteenth century, but, politically speaking, he belongs, of course, to the eighteenth. As I listened to his address my imagination clothed him with the costume of the period, with a wig upon his head, and I could almost imagine myself sitting in the small and crowded chamber which once stood upon this site. The hon. Baronet is a most interesting personality to the archæologists, and he is infinitely precious as a relic, but I do not think he is safe to be taken as a political guide. The essence of the hon. Baronet's objection to this Bill is based on the theory that "a man is entitled to do what he likes with his own life." Does he imagine that the shop assistants of our country are doing what they like with their own lives as it is? Does he imagine that they work eighty or ninety hours a week, as a Committee of the House of Lords reported they did, because they wish to do so? No, they work these long hours because they have to obey the conditions imposed on them by their employers. The employers themselves cannot wish that the hours should be so long as they are; often they themselves are subject to the same condition. Employers and assistants work these long hours, not because they desire to do so, but because they are in the grip of economic forces against which they are wholly powerless to cope. What is liberty? It is that men should be allowed to do what they want to do. We assert that often the law must step in precisely in order that men should have this opportunity of doing what they want and that legislation of this character gives more liberty than it forfeits, and gets rid of far more compulsion than it imposes. The late Government, by the Act of 1904, have already endorsed this principle. It is remarkable that whenever we come to discuss a question, whether licensing or shop hours, we seem obliged to discuss the action of the late Government in 1904. We claim that in principle, although we complain of the inadequacy of their action, the Act of 1904, which prevents men from keeping open their shops after the hours fixed by the closing order in force in their districts, does limit the hours of labour of adult males in their business, and does form a real precedent for the legislation which is proposed by this Bill. I would point out another consideration to the House, that long hours of labour in shops, injurious as they are, hostile as we believe them to be really to liberty, are wholly unnecessary for any economic purpose. There is no question here of the danger of foreign competition. No man, because the shops in his town are closed early, will go to France for a tie, or to Germany for a pair of boots, and the question of foreign competition does not in any degree affect this question. There is another consideration to be borne in mind. As the hon. Member for Great Yarmouth has pointed out, these shop assistants very frequently are in the shop for long hours but they are not actually working throughout. In other words, the business done in the shop can be compressed into shorter hours and there will be in such cases no loss of trade in any direction. The inconvenience caused to the public, if the hours are altered with due consideration of the public needs, will be infinitely small compared to the greatness of the boon conferred upon those engaged in the trade. The results of the Act of 1904, although we may put that forward as a precedent on the point of principle, have been profoundly disappointing. I was in the House at the time and did what I could to support that Bill and improve its details, and I expected some good results would follow from it, but its effect has been very inadequate indeed. Take for instance the great trade of drapers—the drapers' shops are very numerous throughout the whole country and employ tens of thousands of persons. In only ten towns in the whole of the United Kingdom, however, has any draper's assistant got the benefit of that Act. Take the case of the grocers, even more numerous: in only three towns in the whole of this country have the grocers derived any benefit from that Act; and altogether, apart from hairdressers, who appear to have been somewhat successful in putting the Act into operation, only thirty-two Orders have been made in the whole of the country under the Act in three years. For my part if this Bill goes to a division I shall unhesitatingly vote for the Second Reading, not that that vote should be taken as implying that the Government necessarily favour the fifty-one hours week which may be proposed in the Bill or any of the other details of this measure, but merely that the Government accept its principle. We are cordially in accord with those who desire to have some more general and effective regulation of labour in shops. I do not propose to say a word on the details of this Bill; it has been the subject of much criticism in the House to-day, and I think that everyone of those who have spoken in its support admits that it needs amendment in very many details. And when the Report is published, in a very few days, of the Commissioner whom the Home Secretary has sent to Australia and New Zealand to investigate this subject in addition to the question of home work, it will be found that there are a very considerable number of other details, apart from those touched in this Bill, which will have to be dealt with if the Act is to be made successful and effective, and that in scores of points the minutest attention must be given to the working out of the principle. Still less is this the occasion for discussng the details of the Government Bill of next year. Whether the closing should be effected by the limiting of the hours of labour alone, or by fixing closing hours alone, or by a combination of the two, is not for the moment the matter to be decided.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE: It may make a difference in regard to the second division, but we shall be forced to divide against the Government on the Bill going to the Committee of the Whole House unless it is made clear that there is to be an hours clause—both in the first as well as the second part of the Bill. There must be some sort of hours clause.

*MR. HERBERT SAMUEL: I do not see how the consideration of an hours clause relates to the question of the Bill going to a Grand Committee or not. In the New South Wales Act, of which the right hon. Baronet spoke, I think there is no limitation of hours of labour.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE: Yes, it is a sixty hours' week, and a concurrent limitation to half an hour beyond the hours of the day.

*MR. HERBERT SAMUEL: Then my observation falls to the ground, but it is impossible for the Government at the present time, without having given detailed attention to the method of enforcement, in a question which affects very large interests and hundreds of thousands of persons, and which touches very closely the customs of the whole population—it is impossible for the Government now in May, 1908, to pledge themselves to what I insist is a detail, and a question only of the method of enforcing the law.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE: I am most anxious to avoid a division on this question if we are all agreed. Will the Government favourably consider their own statements—for instance, those of the present Prime Minister in the debate in the last Parliament, where the whole matter turned upon these words in the second clause of the Resolution. The late Government offered the first half but they rejected the second half limiting the hours of shop assistants.

*MR. HERBERT SAMUEL: There is no intention of going back in any degree upon pledges which have been given, and the Government is not opposed in any degree in principle to the limitation of the hours of labour as such, as is shown by the fact that we have before the House a Government Bill limiting the hours of labour in mines. We have not formed any hostile opinion to the method proposed by the right hon. Baronet, and will give the most careful and full consideration to the arguments which are advanced in favour of this plan. To-day I can go this far, that the Government in the next session of Parliament will present to the House an effective measure for securing a larger portion of leisure for those engaged in the industry of shops. With regard to committing the Bill to a Grand Committee as distinguished from a Committee of the Whole House, I would ask the House to consider what good purpose would be served by committing this Bill to a Standing Committee upstairs. The hon. Member for St. Helens opposite said they desired it to be advanced a further stage beyond Second Reading in order that a message of hope might be given to the very large number of people who are interested in the passing of this Bill.

A message of hope will be given by passing the Second Reading of this measure, and to impose upon a Standing Committee the burden of spending what would necessarily be many weeks in the consideration of the details of this Bill, without any prospect of its passing into law this session, would, I think, be an unwise procedure on the part of this House.

SIR F. BANBURY was understood to ask if the Bill was not to pass into law this session.

*MR. HERBERT SAMUEL: No Sir, not at all. We have never undertaken that the present Bill should pass into law in the present session, and nothing has been stated to that effect. I would point out that this Bill cannot pass without Government facilities, supposing it were to go upstairs to a Standing Committee, and that Committee spent weeks and weeks on its details and it came back to this House. There is no day either for the Report stage or for the Third Reading, and it would be dead, unless the Government gave it facilities, as far as this session is concerned. The House is also aware that in the state of public business at present, with a crowded Order Paper, it is quite impossible for the Government to promise facilities for a measure so wide in its scope, and so intricate in its details, as this. The hon. Member opposite, I think, will hardly challenge that statement. In these circumstances it is clear that under no conditions, no matter what this House decided to-day as to the Bill going upstairs, would it reach the Statute-book this year. This being so, I ask the House whether it is just to impose upon the Members of the Standing Committee and the Members of the Government the burden of carrying this Bill through its Committee stage? The Home Office, as my right hon. friend has said, is this session very heavily overworked. He and I have to assist the Prime Minister in the detail management of the Licensing Bill; we shall be busy in carrying forward the Mines (Eight Hours) Bill, and that heavy measure, the Children Bill, besides other Departmental measures, and it is physically impossible for us to assist the Committee in redrafting the Bill and seeing it through its Committee stage this year. Under these circumstances I ask the House, and I ask it with confidence, on the one hand to pass the Second Reading of this Bill as an affirmation of its underlying principle, and then to support the Motion which I shall make that it be referred to a Committee of the Whole House.

MR. SEDDON: Is the House to understand that one or both of the principles of the Bill are to be part of the promised measure of the Government?

MR. COCHRANE (Ayrshire, N.), who was indistinctly heard in the Gallery, was understood to say: I fear that a certain amount of pressure has been put upon the right hon. and hon. Gentlemen representing the Home Office to give pledges in order to secure a certain number of votes, and the proceedings of this afternoon must have been watched by hon. Gentlemen opposite and impressed their minds with something like the feeling with which they observed negotiations with a certain Cabinet Minister in North-West Manchester. I am glad to see that the Under-Secretary for the Home Department is more courageous than the Cabinet Minister, for while he encouraged the promoters of this Bill by giving lukewarm praise he gave it its death-blow in the same breath. Therefore the right hon. Baronet may understand that the Government through their representatives here do not intend to allow this Bill to pass into law. My hon. friend twitted the hon. Baronet the Member for the City of London and said he was a relic of the eighteenth century; but nobody has ever heard him speak except in the boldest and most courageous manner, and there is no man who speaks with more conviction and presses his arguments with greater force than my hon. friend. I do not believe that the qualities of courage and consistency are wholly confined to the eighteenth century. I think they have only been less conspicuous of recent years —say, for instance, since the invention of Chinese slavery. I would like to say that in this and many other instances we are entitled to hold strong opinions. He and I differed as to my duty to advocate in this House the Bill which is now the Act of Parliament of 1904, and I can have some sympathy with the Under-Secretary because he and I both agree that that Act will do good work in alleviating some of the long hours which were and still are required to be worked by shop assistants, but to quote that Act as any precedent for this Bill is really a most extraordinary proceeding. That Act at any rate recognised a Liberal and Radical principle, that of local option. When the Act of 1904 is put in force it is necessary that two-thirds of the shops affected should be in favour of the change. Under the Bill now before us the local authority might issue an order that shops be closed before one o'clock in the day, but not fixing any definite hour. I venture to say that the words of the Act of 1904 "not earlier than one o'clock" are better, for the local authority can then order that the shops shall close not earlier than one o'clock in the day. That is a very great difference. Whom does this affect? It affects not only employers in large shops but those in small shops. It affects, according to the Home Secretary, something like a million of persons. Before you deal in this drastic way with the interests of nearly a million of persons, the hard-working people of this country, some further inquiry should be made into the subject. There was a Committee of Inquiry in 1901 which resulted in the Act of 1904. The hon. Member said the Act of 1904 has not done all it might have done; but it has done a very great deal. No less than 140 Orders have been issued in the three years it has been in force; and, in the cases of large cities like Glasgow, not the number, but the importance of the Orders, must be taken into consideration. I do not minimise the evils of long hours; I could not do so. I feel myself that shops are kept open far longer than they need be, and that those who are employed in shops which are unnecessarily kept open must suffer. But however you may desire to improve their condition you must be careful you do not deprive many useful citizens of their means of living. The question has been very thoroughly dealt with. The Home Secretary himself said he thought the Bill required very careful and prolonged consideration; and I think it would be wise that the hon. Gentleman the Under-Secretary before he pledges himself to support this Bill, or any similar Bill next session, should pledge himself rather to have a further inquiry into the subject. Enormous interests are involved, and they at least demand some consideration. I would remind the hon. Member of the speech made only two days ago by the hon. Member for Northwich at a large meeting of the Liberal Party. He pointed out to those around him that the Liberal Party had the credit, or rather discredit, of not taking interest in the trade of the country, and he said—

"Let us have a sane interest in trade."

I would submit to him that amongst those who do the largest bulk of the trade of the country are our small shopkeeper. The hon. Members for Sunderland, Finsbury, Preston, South East Lancaster, and others who have spoken to-day in this debate have everyone of them in a greater or lesser degree said that this proposal spells ruin to the small shopkeepers. Under these circumstances I am glad that the Under-Secretary has had more courage than the Home Secretary, who delivered a speech strongly antagonistic to the details of the Bill, pointing out that the whole of the staff of factory inspectors which the Home Office have at the present time would not be sufficient to put this Bill in force if it became law. He also pointed out how in shops they would not be able to employ persons under fourteen years of age, and said that in almost every line of the Bill there were glaring anomalies. I expected that at the end of his criticisms the Home Secretary was going to say that the Government, having read the Bill, recognised that while the intention might be good yet the details were perfectly unworkable, and that therefore he, as responsible for legislation of this character in this House, refused to assent to the Second Reading. That would have been the courageous and manly course to pursue. Instead of that, the hon. Member opposite is left in charge of the Bill, and he has the unpleasant duty of trying to conciliate the supporters of the Government in carrying out the duty of squelching it. I think the last words of the hon. Gentleman were that "almost every line of the Bill would require to be amended if it were proceeded with." He said—

"We cannot give time to this Bill."

Not a single line in the Bill does the hon. Gentleman support, yet he is going to vote for the Second Reading. Could anything be more fraudulent or misleading to the country, the House, and to supporters of the Government than this mere support of a title, and something in the air? The hon. Gentleman says that the Government is too full of business in connection with the various Bills they are pledged to carry through, to be able to give more time to the Bill in the House and in Committee upstairs; yet they are going to allow the Second Reading of a measure to every line of which they are opposed. That seems to me to be a typical example of the way in which members of the great Liberal Party are dragged through the mazes of legislation in this House. The right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean is quite wide enough awake to know that if this Bill is not sent to a Committee upstairs it will be perfectly dead, and he will think, I venture to say, that it would have been far more courageous on the part of those of whom he is a follower, if they had said straight out that they would vote against the Second Reading.

MR. LUPTON (Lincolnshire, Sleaford) rose to continue the debate.

SIR CHARLES DILKE rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

Question put, "That the Question be now put."

The House divided:—Ayes, 197; Noes, 48. (Division List No. 73).

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.
Allen, A. Acland (Christchurch)
Ambrose, Robert
Armstrong, W. C. Heaton
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Baker, Sir John (Portsmouth)
Balfour, Robert (Lanark)
Barker, John
Barnes, G. N.
Beale, W. P.
Bellairs, Carlyon
Berridge, T. H. D.
Bethell, Sir J.H.(Essex, Romf'rd
Bramsdon, T. A.
Branch, James
Brigg, John
Brunner, J. F. L. (Lancs., Leigh)
Brunner, RtHn SirJ.T(Cheshire
Bryce, J. Annan
Burns, Rt. Hon. John
Byles, William Pollard
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Causton, Rt.Hn.RichardKnight
Cawley, Sir Frederick
Channing, Sir Francis Allston
Cherry, Rt. Hon. R. R.
Cleland, J. W.
Clough, William
Collins, Stephen (Lambeth)
Compton-Rickett, Sir J.

Cooper, G. J.
Corbett, C. H. (Sussex, E. Grinst'd
Cotton, Sir H. J. S.
Craig, Herbert J. (Tynemouth)
Cremer, Sir William Randal
Curran, Peter Francis
Davies, M. Vaughan- (Cardigan
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dobson, Thomas W.
Duncan, J. H. (York, Otley)
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)
Edwards, Clement (Denbigh)
Edwards, Enoch (Hanley)
Edwards, Sir Francis (Radnor)
Esslemont, George Birnie
Evans, Sir Samuel T.
Ferens, T. R.
Ffrench, Peter
Gibb, James (Harrow)
Gill, A. H.
Glendinning, R. G.
Gooch, George Peabody (Bath)
Grant, Corrie
Grayson, Albert Victor
Greenwood, G. (Peterborough)
Griffith, Ellis J.
Gulland, John W.
Haslam, Lewis (Monmouth)
Hazel, Dr. A. E.
Hedges, A. Paget
Helme, Norval Watson
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Henry, Charles S.
Herbert, Col. Sir Ivor (Mon., S.)
Herbert, T. Arnold (Wycombe)
Higham, John Sharp
Hobart, Sir Robert
Hobhouse, Charles E. H.
Hogan, Michael
Holland, Sir William Henry
Horniman, Emslie John
Hudson, Walter
Idris, T. H. W.
Illingworth, Percy H.
Jackson, R. S.
Jacoby, Sir James Alfred
Jenkins, J.
Jones, Sir D. Brynmor (Swansea
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jowett, F. W.
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kekewich, Sir George
Kincaid-Smith, Captain
Laidlaw, Robert
Lamb, Ernest H. (Rochester)
Lamont, Norman
Lehmann, R. C.
Lever, A. Levy (Essex, Harwich
Lever, W. H. (Cheshire, Wirral)
Levy, Sir Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, Rt. Hon. David
Lyell, Charles Henry
Lynch, H. B.
Macdonald, J. R. (Leicester)
Macdonald, J. M. (Falkirk B'ghs
Mackarness, Frederic C.
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
Macpherson, J. T.
MacVeagh, Jeremiah (Down, S.
MacVeigh, Charles (Donegal, E.)
M'Arthur, Charles
M'Callum, John M.
M'Crae, George
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Laren, H. D. (Stafford, W.)
Mallet, Charles E.
Markham, Arthur Basil
Marnham, F. J.
Mason, A. E. W. (Coventry)
Menzies, Walter
Middlebrook, William
Molteno, Percy Alport
Money, L. G. Chiozza
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Morrell, Philip
Morton, Alpheus Cleophas
Muldoon, John
Myer, Horatio
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nicholson, Charles N. (Doncast'r
Nolan, Joseph
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, William (Cork)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Donnell, C. J. (Walworth)
O'Grady, J.
O'Kelly, James (Roscommon, N.
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Philipps, Col. Ivor (S'thampton
Philipps, Owen C. (Pembroke)
Pickersgill, Edward Hare
Price, C. E. (Edinb'gh, Central
Price, Robert John (Norfolk, E.)
Priestley, W. E. B. (Bradford, E.)
Radford, G. H.
Raphael, Herbert H.
Rea, Walter Russell (Scarboro'
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Rees, J. D.
Richardson, A.
Roberts, Charles H. (Lincoln)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robertson, Sir G. Scott (Bradf'rd
Robertson, J. M. (Tyneside)
Robson, Sir William Snowdon
Rogers, F. E. Newman
Rowlands, J.
Runciman, Rt. Hon. Walter
Russell, T. W.
Rutherford, V. H. (Brentford)
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Schwann, C. Duncan (Hyde)
Schwann, Sir C. E. (Manchester)
Seaverns, J. H.
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Silcock, Thomas Ball
Smeaton, Donald Mackenzie
Spicer, Sir Albert
Stanger, H. Y.
Stanley, Hn. A. Lyulph (Chesh.)
Steadman, W. C.
Straus, B. S. (Mile End)
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Summerbell, T.
Sutherland, J. E.
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Tennant, H. J. (Berwickshire)
Thomas, David Alfred (Merthyr
Thorne, William
Torrance, Sir A. M.
Ure, Alexander
Verney, F. W.
Walker, H. De R. (Leicester)
Walsh, Stephen
Walton, Joseph
Ward, John (Stoke-upon-Trent)
Ward, W. Dudley (Southampt'n
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, Rt. Hn. E (Clackmannan
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney)
Watt, Henry A.
Wedgwood, Josiah C.
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whitehead, Rowland
Wiles, Thomas
Wilkie, Alexander
Wilson, Hon. G. G. (Hull, W.)
Wilson, W. T. (Westhoughton)
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Seddon and Mr. Scott.

NOES.

Acland-Hood, Rt Hn. Sir Alex. F.
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Baring, Godfrey (Isle of Wight)
Barrie, H. T. (Londonderry, N.)
Beckett, Hon. Gervase
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bowles, G. Stewart
Bull, Sir William James
Butcher, Samuel Henry
Cecil, Lord John P. Joicey-
Cecil, Lord R. (Marylebone, E.)
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Craig, Charles Curtis (Antrim, S.
Craig, Capt. James (Down, E.)
Craik, Sir Henry
Dalrymple, Viscount
Dixon-Hartland, Sir Fred Dixon
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Fell, Arthur
Forster, Henry William
Gardner, Ernest
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Harrison-Broadley, H. B.
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Kerry, Earl of
Kimber, Sir Henry
Lambton, Hon. Frederick Wm.
Lockwood, Rt. Hn. Lt.-Col. A. R.
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Dublin, S.
Lowe, Sir Francis William
Lupton, Arnold

Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
MacCaw, William J. MacGeagh
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Nicholson, Wm.G. (Petersfield)
Pease,Herbert Pike(Darlington
Rawlinson,JohnFrederickPeel
Ridsdale, E. A.
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Salter, Arthur Clavell
Starkey, John R.
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Valentia, Viscount
Wilson,A. Stanley(York, E.R.)
Wortley, Rt. Hn. C. B. Stuart-

Tellers for the Noes—Mr. H. H. Marks and Sir Francis Powell.

Question put accordingly, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

The House divided :—Ayes, 190 ; Noes, 45. (Division List No. 74).

AYES.

Abraham,William (Cork, N. E.)
Allen, A. Acland (Christchurch
Armstrong, W. C. Heaton
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Baker, Sir John (Portsmouth)
Balfour, Robert (Lanark)
Barker, John
Barnes, G. N.
Beale, W. P.
Bellairs, Carlyon
Bethell,SirJ.H(Essex, Romf'rd
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bramsdon, T. A.
Branch, James
Brigg, John
Brunner,J.F.L.(Lancs., Leigh
Brunner,RtHn.SirJ T(Cheshire
Bryce, J. Annan
Burns, Rt. Hon. John
Byles, William Pollard
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Channing, Sir Francis Allston
Cherry, Rt. Hon. R. R.
Cleland, J. W.
Clough, William
Collins, Stephen (Lambeth)
Compton-Rickett, Sir J.
Cooper, G. J.
Corbett,C H (Sussex,E.Grinst'd
Cotton, Sir H. J. S.
Craig, Herbert J. (Tynemouth)
Cremer, Sir William Randal
Curran, Peter Francis
Davies,M.Vaughan- (Cardigan)
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dobson, Thomas W.
Duncan, J. H. (York, Otley)
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)
Edwards, Clement (Denbigh)
Edwards, Enoch (Hanley)
Edwards, Sir Francis (Radnor)
Esslemont, George Birnie
Evans, Sir Samuel T.
Ferens, T. R.
Ffrench, Peter
Gardner, Ernest
Gibb, James (Harrow)
Gill, A. H.
Glendinning, R. G.
Gooch, George Peabody (Bath)
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Grant, Corrie
Grayson, Albert Victor
Greenwood, G. (Peterborough)
Griffith, Ellis J.
Gulland, John W.
Haslam, Lewis (Monmouth)
Haworth, Arthur A.
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Hazel, Dr. A. E.
Hedges, A. Paget
Helme, Norval Watson
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Herbert,Col. Sir Ivor (Mon., S.)
Herbert, T. Arnold (Wycombe)
Higham, John Sharp
Hobart, Sir Robert
Hobhouse, Charles E. H.
Hogan, Michael
Holland, Sir William Henry
Horniman, Emslie John
Hudson, Walter
Idris, T. H. W.
Illingworth, Percy H.
Jackson, R. S.
Jacoby, Sir James Alfred
Jenkins, J.
Jones,Sir D.Brynmor (Swansea
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jowett, F. W.
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kekewich, Sir George
Kincaid-Smith, Captain
Laidlaw, Robert
Lamb, Ernest H. (Rochester)
Lamont, Norman
Lehmann, R. C.
Lever,A. Levy (Essex, Harwich
Lever, W.H. (Cheshire, Wirral)
Levy, Sir Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, Rt. Hon. David
Lyell, Charles Henry
Lynch, H. B.
Macdonald, J.R. (Leicester)
Macdonald,J.M. (Falkirk B'ghs
Mackarness, Frederic C.
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
Macpherson, J. T.
MacVeagh, Jeremiah (Down,S.)
MacVeigh,Charles (Donegal, E.
M'Arthur, Charles
M'Callum, John M.
M'Crae, George
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Laren, H. D. (Stafford, W.)
Mallet, Charles E.
Markham, Arthur Basil
Marnham, F. J.
Mason, A. E. W. (Coventry)
Menzies, Walter
Middlebrook, William
Molteno, Percy Alport
Money, L. G. Chiozza
Morrell, Philip
Morton, Alpheus Cleophas
Muldoon, John
Myer, Horatio
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nicholson,Charles N.(Doncast'r
Nolan, Joseph
Norton,Capt.Cecil William
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, William (Cork)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Donnell, C. J. (Walworth)
O'Grady, J.
O'Kelly,James (Roscommon,N
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Pease, J. A. (Saffron Walden)
Philipps,Col. Ivor (S'thampton
Philipps, Owen C. (Pembroke)
Pickersgill, Edward Hare
Price, C. E. (Edinb'gh, Central)
Price,Robert John (Norfolk, E.
Radford, G. H.
Raphael, Herbert H.
Rea, Walter Russell (Scarboro')
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Richardson, A.
Roberts, Charles H. (Lincoln)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robertson, J. M. (Tyneside)
Robson, Sir William Snowdon
Rogers, F. E. Newman
Rowlands, J.
Runciman, Rt. Hon. Walter
Russell, T. W.
Rutherford, V. H. (Brentford)
Salter, Arthur Clavell
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Schwann, C. Duncan (Hyde)
Schwann,Sir C.E. (Manchester)
Seaverns, J. H.
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Silcock, Thomas Ball
Smeaton, Donald Mackenzie
Spicer, Sir Albert
Stanger, H. Y.
Stanley, Hn.A. Lyulph (Chesh.)
Steadman, W. C.
Summerbell, T.
Sutherland, J. E.
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Tennant, H. J. (Berwickshire)
Thomas,David Alfred(Merthyr

Thorne, William
Torrance, Sir A. M.
Ure, Alexander
Verney, F. W.
Walker, H. De R. (Leicester)
Walsh, Stephen
Walton, Joseph
Ward, John (Stoke-upon-Trent
Ward, W. Dudley (Southampton
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, Rt. Hn. E (Clackmannan
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney)
Watt, Henry A.
Wedgwood, Josiah C.
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire)
White, Luke (York, E.R.)
Whitehead, Rowland
Wiles, Thomas
Wilkie, Alexander
Wilson, Hon. G. G. (Hull, W.)
Wilson, W. T. (Westhoughton)
Yoxall, James Henry

Tellers for the Ayes—Mr. Seddon and Mr. Scott.

NOES.

Acland-Hood, Rt. Hn. Sir Alex. F
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Baring, Godfrey (Isle of Wight)
Barrie, H. T. (Londonderry, N.)
Beckett, Hon. Gervase
Bowles, G. Stewart
Bull, Sir William James
Cawley, Sir Frederick
Cecil, Lord John P. Joicey-
Cecil, Lord R. (Marylebone, E.)
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Cox, Harold
Craig, Charles Curtis (Antrim, S.
Craig, Captain James (Down, E.)
Craik, Sir Henry
Dalrymple, Viscount
Dixon-Hartland, Sir Fred Dixon
Fell, Arthur
Forster, Henry William
Harrison-Broadley, H. B.
Kimber, Sir Henry
Lambton, Hon. Frederick Wm
Lockwood, Rt. Hn. Lt.-Col. A. R.
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Dublin, S.
Lowe, Sir Francis William
Lupton, Arnold
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
MacCaw, William J. MacGeagh
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Nicholson, Wm. G. (Petersfield)
Rawlinson, John Frederick Peel
Ridsdale, E. A.
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Starkey, John R.
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Valentia, Viscount
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E. R.)
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wortley, Rt. Hn. C. B. Stuart-

Tellers for the Noes—Mr. H. H. Marks and Sir Francis Powell.

Main Question put, and agreed to. Bill read a second time.

Motion made, and Question put, "That the Bill be committed to a Committee of the whole House." — (*Mr. Herbert Samuel*).

The House divided:—Ayes, 139; Noes, 23. (Division List No. 75).

AYES.

Allen, A. Acland (Christchurch
Balfour, Robert (Lanark)
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Baring, Godfrey (Isle of Wight)
Barrie, H. T. (Londonderry, N.)
Beale, W. P.
Bellairs, Carlyon
Bowles, G. Stewart
Bramsdon, T. A.
Branch, James
Brigg, John
Bryce, J. Annan
Burns, Rt. Hon. John
Byles, William Pollard
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Cawley, Sir Frederick
Cecil, Lord R. (Marylebone, E.)
Cherry, Rt. Hon. R. R.
Cleland, J. W.
Clough, William
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Collins, Stephen (Lambeth)
Compton-Rickett, Sir J.
Cooper, J. G.
Corbett, C H (Sussex, E. Grinst'd
Craig, Herbert J. (Tynemouth)
Craik, Sir Henry
Curran, Peter Francis
Davies, M. Vaughan- (Cardigan)
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Duncan, J. H. (York, Otley)
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)
Edwards, Sir Francis (Radnor)
Esslemont, George Birnie
Fell, Arthur
Forster, Henry William
Gibb, James (Harrow)
Glendinning, R. G.
Gooch, George Peabody (Bath)
Grant, Corrie
Greenwood, G. (Peterborough)
Gulland, John W.
Haslam, Lewis (Monmouth)
Haworth, Arthur A.
Hazel, Dr. A. E.
Hedges, A. Paget
Helme, Norval Watson
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Henry, Charles S.
Herbert, Col. Sir Ivor (Mon., S.)
Herbert, T. Arnold (Wycombe)
Higham, John Sharp
Hobart, Sir Robert
Hobhouse, Charles E. H.
Hudson, Walter
Idris, T. H. W.
Illingworth, Percy H.
Jackson, R. S.
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Jowett, F. W.
Joyce, Michael
Kekewich, Sir George
Kincaid-Smith, Captain
Laidlaw, Robert
Lamb, Ernest H. (Rochester)
Lamont, Norman
Lever, A. Levy (Essex, Harwich
Levy, Sir Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, Rt. Hon. David
Lockwood, Rt. Hn. Lt.-Col. A. R.
Lowe, Sir Francis William
Lupton, Arnold
Lyell, Charles Henry
Lynch, H. B.
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Mackarness, Frederic C.

Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
Macpherson, J. T.
M'Arthur, Charles
M'Callum, John M.
M'Crae, George
M'Laren, H. D. (Stafford, W.)
Middlebrook, William
Molteno, Percy Alport
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Morton, Alpheus Cleophas
Myer, Horatio
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nicholson, Charles N. (Doncast'r
Nicholson, Wm. G. (Petersfield)
Nussey, Thomas Willans
Pickersgill, Edward Hare
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Price, C. E. (Edinb'gh, Central)
Price, Robert John (Norfolk, E.
Raphael, Herbert H.
Rea, Walter Russell (Scarboro'
Rees, J. D.
Richardson, A.
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roberts, Charles H. (Lincoln)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Rowlands, J.
Russell, T. W.
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Schwann, C. Duncan (Hyde)
Seaverns, J. H.
Seddon, J.
Silcock, Thomas Ball
Smeaton, Donald Mackenzie
Spicer, Sir Albert
Stanger, H. Y.
Steadman, W. C.
Straus, B. S. (Mile End)
Sutherland, J. E.
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Tennant, H. J. (Berwickshire)
Torrance, Sir A. M.
Valentia, Viscount
Verney, F. W.
Walton, Joseph
Ward, W Dudley (Southampton
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, Rt. Hn. E (Clackmannan
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney)
Watt, Henry A.
Wedgwood, Josiah C.
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whitehead, Rowland
Wiles, Thomas
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E.R.
Wilson, W. T. (Westhoughton)
Wortley, Rt. Hn. C. B. Stuart-
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. J. A. Pease and Captain Norton.

NOES.

Banner, John S. Harmood-
Barnes, G. N.
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bull, Sir William James
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Craig, Captain James (Down, E.)
Cremer, Sir William Randal
Dalrymple, Viscount
Dixon-Hartland, Sir Fred Dixon
Gardner, Ernest
Grayson, Albert Victor
Kimber, Sir Henry
Lambton, Hon. Frederick Wm.
MacCaw, William J. MacGeagh
Macdonald, J. R. (Leicester)
Markham, Arthur Basil
Marks, H. H. (Kent)
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
O'Grady, J.
Rawlinson, John Frederick Peel
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Thorne, William
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Claude Hay and Mr. Goulding.

Bill committed to a Committee of the whole House for Monday next.

INTOXICATING LIQUOR LICENCES (ENGLAND AND WALES) (TRANSFERS.)

Address for "Return relating to the transfer of Licences for the sale of Intoxicating Liquor to be consumed on the premises in England and Wales, showing for every licensing district the number of applications under Section 4 and Section 14 of The Alehouses Act, 1828, granted in respect of full or Alehouse Licences and of other On-Licences during the year ended the 31st day of December, 1907; and, in cases where the same licence was so transferred more than once during that period, the number of times any licence was so transferred."—(*Mr. Charles Roberts*).

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES)

Sir WILLIAM BRAMPTON GURDON Reported from the Committee of Selection: That they had discharged the following Members from Standing Committee A (in respect of the Summary Jurisdiction (Ireland) Bill): Mr. Attorney General, Mr. Secretary Gladstone, and Mr. Herbert Samuel; and had appointed in substitution (in respect of the Summary Jurisdiction (Ireland) Bill): Mr. Birrell, Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, and Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland.

Report to lie upon the Table.

Whereupon Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House without Question put, pursuant to Standing Order No. 3.

Adjourned at one minute after Five o'clock till Monday next.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Monday, 4th May, 1908.

The House met at a quarter before Three of the Clock.

NEW WRITS.

For burgh of Dundee, in the room of Right hon. Edmund Robertson, K.C. (Chiltern Hundreds).—(*Mr. Whiteley.*)

Stirling district of burghs. Right hon. Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, G.C.B., deceased.—(*Mr. Whiteley.*)

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

DIVISIONAL ORDER BILLS (STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE THERETO COMLPIED WITH).

Mr. Speaker laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders which are applicable thereto have been complied with, viz.: Metropolitan Police Provisional Order Bill.

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time To-morrow.

Margate Corporation Bill; Swinton and Mexbrough Gas Bill.—Read the third time, and passed.

Manchester Corporation Bill.—As amended, considered; to be read the third time.

Argentine North-Eastern Railway Bill. [Lords]; Cardiff Railway Bill [Lords]; St. Marylebone Borough Council (Superannuation) Bill [Lords]; Skegness Urban District Council Bill [Lords].—Read a second time, and committed.

PETITIONS.

CHILDREN BILL.

Petitions in favour: From Govanhill; Lower Edmonton; Newton Burgoland; and Wigston Magna; to lie upon the Table.

COAL MINES (EIGHT HOURS) (No. 2) BILL

Petitions in favour: From Allerton Bywater; Balgonie; Bickerstaffe; Birchwood; Blackwell; Blairhall, Blairadam; Bowhill; Buckhaven; B. Winning (two); Chorley; Cilely; Closyryn; Coaltown of Wemyss; Coed Ely; Cowdenbeach; Crooke; Crossgates; Cymmer; Denbeath; Dinas Isaf; Doinbristle; Dowlais; Dundonald; Dunfermline; Duxbury Park; Eccleston Hall; Ellerbeck; Emlyn Colliery; Featherstone Main; Fordell; Fryston; Glenburn; Hedge; Hill of Beath; International Colliery; Kelty; Kilburn; Kinglassie; Kingseat; Kinross; Kippax; Kirkford; Lassodie; Lassodie Mill; Lathom; Lethans; Llanhilleth; Lochore; Lumphinnans; Methil; Methil Hill; Morton; Mount Vernon; Newton; Oakley; Penyfan; Pilsley (two); Raith; Shirland; Skelmersdale; South Kirkby; South Wingfield; Standish; Steelend; Swanwick (two); Tibshelf (two); Tirydail; Townhill; Trencherbore; Upper Hartshay; Wellsgreen; Wellwood; and West Wemyss; to lie upon the Table.

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION (ENGLAND AND WALES) BILL.

Petition from Audlem, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

HOURS OF LABOUR (SURFACEMEN) BILL.

Petition from Glasgow, against; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSING BILL.

Petitions against: From Abingdon; Appleby Magna; Armley; Ashford (two); Babcary; Balsall Heath; Bethersden; Birmingham (two); Bishop Middleham; Bolton; Boston; Brayton; Bridgend; Bubwith; Castle Eden; Cawood; Chilham; Cleckheaton; Compton Dandon; Cumberland (West); Derby (four); Derbyshire (North-East) (two); Drax; Faringdon; Farnley; Ferry Hill; Forest of Dean; Great Chart; Hallamshire; Halesowen; Hemingbrough; Hexham; Howden (two); Ipswich; Kennington (Berks); Kettering; Kilham; Kingsnorth; Kippax; Langport; Langtoft; Leeds (four); Louth; Lumley; Lydford;

Manchester; Medway Division; Metropolitan Police District of London; Monk Fryston; Monmouth County; Moray; North Bucks (two); Orton on the Hill; Oswestry; Pocklington; Pontypridd; Pudsey; Ravenstone; Rotherham; Rudston; Saffron Walden; Saxmundham; Selby; Selly Oak; Sheffield (three); Shepton Mallet; Shipley; Skipworth; Small Heath; Somerton (three); Staxton; Street (Somerset); Sutton; Thorner; Wantage; Warley; West Derbyshire; Wittersham; Woodbridge; and Woolacombe; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSING BILL.

Petitions for alteration: From Acre Mill; Association of Conservative Clubs; Bradford (Yorks) (five); Coxlodge; Edmonton (four); Horeb; Horsmonden; Newton Burgoland; and Pentrefelm; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSING BILL.

Petitions in favour: From Aberavon (two); Aberdeen (two); Abergwili; Abernethy; Aberporth; Abingdon; Addingham; Airdrie; Altarnun; Ashby-de-la-Zouche; Ashford (Kent) (four); Ashwater; Attercliffe; Audlem; Awsworth; Bacup (two); Barry (four); Barton on Humber; Bedwas; Belper (four); Bere Ferrers; Bethnal Green; Beulah; Birkenhead (six); Birmingham (two); Birstall; Black Torrington (two); Blairgowrie (two); Bodmin; Bovey Tracey; Boyne; Brabourne; Bradford (three); Brechin; Bromley; Broom Park; Buckhaven; Burnham on Crouch; Bury; Cairneyhill; Carbrook (two); Cardenden; Cardiff; Carinich; Carlisle (fifteen); Carntyne; Castellan; Castleton; Chadwell Heath; Chatham (two); Chepstow; Chernside; Chinley; Chiswick; Clapham; Coalville (two); Coatbridge; Coleford; Colwick; Corfe Castle; Coundon (two); Crosby; Crossgates; Cullercoats; Cwmavon (two); Cwmtran; Darlington; Darnall (two); Derby (two); Devonport; Dolphinholme; Dronfield; Dulwich; Dunbarney; Dunfermline (two); Dunnington; East Wemyss; Eastwood; Ecclefechan; Eccles (five); Edinburgh (twelve); Edmonton (six); Egham; Edmonton; Enderby; Etterby; Exeter (two); Fenny Stratford; Flint; Flore; Fulham (two); Gilfach-Goen; Gillingham (three); Glasgow (five); Gomersal; Goodmayes; Goole (two); Gourock; Grampound Road; Halifax (four); Haltwhistle; Hartlepool (seven); Hastings (twelve); Hatherleigh; Haydon Bridge; Heckmondwike; Henllys; Hillsbro'; Hinckley (two); Holsworthy; Honicknowle (two); Hornchurch; Horsmonden; Hulme; Ibstock; Ilford; Ilsington; Intake; Kelty; Kennington (two); Kibworth Harcourt; Kilbarchan; Kilmarnock (two); Kingsteignton; Kirkpatrick; Kirkurd; Laleston; Lambeth (three); Langley; Langley Moor; Larne; Leeds; Lee Moor, etc.; Leicester; Leith (six); Leslie (two); Letchworth; Leyland; Leyton; Liverpool; Llanelly; Llanfair-Tathaiarn; Llanon; Llanwamled; Lochgelly; Looe; Lothersdale; Louth; Lumb Valley (two); Lustleigh; Luton; Lydbrook; Macclesfield (two); Manchester (two); Manor Park; Market Harborough; Mawdesley; Merton; Milnsbridge; Mitchell; Mold; Moorside; Moretonhampstead; Musselburgh; Nantwich; Nelson (two); Newbridge (two); New Burgoland; Newcastle Emlyn (two); Newhaven; Newland; Newport (Mon.); Newport Pagnall; New Sheldon; Newton Abbot (two); Newton Mearns; Neston; Normanton; Northampton (three); Nottingham (five); Oakengates; Okehampton (two); Owlerton; Padstow; Paisley (ten); Parkhead; Partick; Patricroft; Penarth (two); Pencader; Pencoed (two); Pendlebury; Pensnett; Pentrechyth; Pilsley; Polmadie; Pollockshaws; Ponders End; Port Talbot; Porthcawl; Preston (Lancs.); Primitive Methodist Church in England and Wales; Queens; Ramsbottom; Rawdon; Rawmarch; Redwick; Roche; Rochester (two); Rothbury; Rotherham; Rushden; Ruthrieston; St. Austell; St. Leonards; Sandbach; Scone; Sevenoaks; Sheffield; Street; Somerton (two); South Kirkby; South Queensferry; Stanningley; Stapleford; Staveley; Steppa; Stockport; Stratford; Street (four); Sutcombe (two); Swallow; Swanscombe; Swansea; Tamerton Foliott; Tavistock; Teignmouth (two); Thornhill; Tinsley; Tooting, Totnes, Tottenham (five), Wadebridge, Walkden; Walkhampton;

Walkley; Walton; Warleggan; Wellington (Salop); Willington (three); Wimborne; Wincanton; Winton; Wolsingham; Woodbridge; Woodseats; Workington; Worksop; Worplesdon; Yarmouth; and Yelverton; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSING BILL AND LIQUOR TRAFFIC (LOCAL OPTION) (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Stranraer, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

LIQUOR TRAFFIC (LOCAL OPTION) (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petitions against: From Coatbridge; Moray and Nairn; Pollokshaws; and Vale of Leven; to lie upon the Table.

LIQUOR TRAFFIC (LOCAL OPTION) (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petitions in favour: From Alyth; Arbroath; Bathgate; Brechin; Ecclefechan; Edinburgh (four); Glasgow; Kilbarchan; Newton Mearns; Paisley (five); and West Calder; to lie upon the Table.

MERCHANDISE MARKS BILL.

Petition from Glasgow, for alteration, to lie upon the Table.

PUBLIC-HOUSES (EXCLUSION OF CHILDREN) (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petitions in favour: From Border District; Dalry; and Edinburgh; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY BILL.

Petitions in favour: From Beverley; Croydon (four); Hounslow; London (four); Market Drayton; Norbury; Nottingham; Selby; South Norwood; Thornton Heath (two); Tongham; Tooting (two); and Upper Norwood; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION (PROCEEDINGS).

Copy presented, of Return of Proceedings during the month of January, 1908 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

DEATHS FROM ALCOHOL (IRELAND.)

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 3rd February; Mr. Sloan]; to lie upon the Table.

PUBLIC RECORDS.

Copy presented, of Sixty-ninth Annual Report of the Deputy Keeper of the Public Records [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND) (GENERAL REPORTS).

Copy presented, of General Report by the Chief Inspector of the Southern Division of Scotland for the year 1907 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

BOARD OF AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES.

Copy presented, of Annual Report of Proceedings under the Acts relating to Sea Fisheries for the year 1906 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

RAILWAY SERVANTS (HOURS OF LABOUR).

Copy presented, of Return, in pursuance of Section 4 of The Regulation of Railways Act, 1889, of Railway Servants of certain classes who were on one or more occasions during the month of January, 1908, on duty on the Railways of the United Kingdom for more than twelve hours at a time; or who, after being on duty more than twelve hours, were allowed to resume work with less than nine hours rest [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

LIGHT RAILWAYS ACT, 1896.

Copy presented, of Report of the Proceedings of the Board of Trade up to 31st December, 1907, and of the Proceedings of the Light Railway Commissioners up to the same date [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 133.]

EAST INDIA (ARMY AND POPULATION).

Address for "Return showing the strength of the Army in India, European and Native, and the extent of the population and area under British rule in India at the following periods, namely 1856, 1860, after the reductions effected by Lord Lawrence, 1886, at the present time, and also showing the recommendations as to numbers made by different Army Commissions, and the increase in the garrison of Burma after the annexation of Upper Burma."—(*Mr. Rees.*)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES

The Pacific Cable.

Mr. BELLAIRS (Lynn Regis): To ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the estimated loss to the British taxpayer of £62,590 on the Pacific cable for 1908-9 is mainly due to the faulty route selected to the barren rock called Fanning Island; and whether it is practicable, and, if so, will the question be considered in conjunction with the Colonial Governments, to underrun and relay the cables to the shipping port of Honolulu, where the American cables land, so as to benefit British shipping, afford alternative routes by the American cables, and gain a fresh route to the Far East.

(*Answered by Colonel Seely.*) The estimated loss on the Pacific cable for the year 1908-9 is £69,000, of which only five-eighteenths, or under £14,000, will fall on the British taxpayer. The route *via* Fanning Island was adopted in accordance with the desire of the Colonial Governments concerned that the route should touch only British territory. In the absence of any suggestion from those Governments, His Majesty's Government do not propose to consider the question of relaying the line so as to touch at Honolulu.

Terms of Superannuation to Professors of Irish Universities.

Mr. RAWLINSON (Cambridge University): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury what are the maximum terms of superannuation which can be given to professors of Queen's College, Cork, and Queen's College, Galway, under the Irish University Bill; what were the terms of superannuation granted to the professors and officers of the Queen's University in Ireland who were not transferred to equivalent posts in the Royal University of Ireland; and what were the terms of superannuation granted to professors and officers of Marischal College, Aberdeen, whose services were not retained upon the amalgamation of the college with the University of Aberdeen.

(*Answered by Mr. Hobhouse.*) The maximum terms of superannuation, that is to say, pension granted on retirement through age or infirmity, which can be given to the professors under the Irish University Bill are the same as can be given to them now, viz., two-thirds of salary and emoluments, according to the scale laid down by Section 2 of the Superannuation Act of 1859. The maximum terms of compensation, as distinguished from superannuation, are to be determined in each case by the Commissioners appointed under the Bill, subject to an appeal to the Lord-Lieutenant in Council. Professors and officers of the Queen's University in Ireland, who were not transferred to equivalent posts in the Royal University of Ireland, were declared entitled to receive by way of retiring pension the full amount of their salaries as officers of the Queen's University, under Section 14 of The University (Ireland) Education Act, 1879. The Universities (Scotland) Act, 1858, under which Marischal College, Aberdeen, was amalgamated with the University of Aberdeen, does not prescribe the amount of compensation to be granted to professors and officers whose services were not retained; and I am not aware of the amount of compensation awarded.

Belfast and Dublin Universities—Senates.

Mr. MASSIE (Wiltshire, Cricklade): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, inasmuch as a detailed classification, with credentials, of the persons proposed as the first Senate of the University to have its seat in Belfast has been published in Cd. 4042, the omission of a similar classification in Cd. 4041 in respect of the University to have its seat in Dublin has occurred by inadvertence; and whether he will remedy this omission.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The Senate of the new University to have its seat in

Belfast will be constituted on a permanent basis, out of elements already in existence, after the period of five years referred to in the first clause of the Bill. Though all the members of the first Senate are to be nominated by the Crown, it has been possible in selecting the members to keep in view the exact proportion of the classes into which members of the permanent governing body will fall. Though the assignment of some members of the first Senate to one category rather than to another is a somewhat arbitrary matter, the names are shown in relation to the permanent constitution; and this will facilitate the filling of casual vacancies during the initial period in such manner that the Senate will work from the beginning as if it were a representative body. But the other University is to be of a federal type, having three constituent colleges, each of which will in time have its own governing body constituted on the principle of representation. These governing bodies, each containing representatives of the Crown, the University Senate, the professors, the graduates, and the local governing bodies, will send representatives to the Senate when that body is constituted on its permanent basis. But of the three colleges, one does not yet exist and the other two will not have governing bodies constituted on a permanent basis until some three years after the inauguration of the new University. I did not consider it practicable to observe an exact correspondence with the permanent constitution of the Senate in choosing the members of the first nominated Senate. For this reason the names are arranged in alphabetical order and not in classes. As regards the credentials of the members, I know that every one is qualified to be a member of a University Senate, and the great majority have had ample experience of education as teachers or administrators.

Increase of Pay for Adult Night Messengers.

Mr. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): To ask the Postmaster-General whether, in view of his statement that all questions relating to increase of pay to adult night messengers had been settled, he can explain why it has not yet been put into operation.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) As I stated on 11th March, the revision is being carried out, and, as regards Ireland, it is practically completed. It has necessarily taken some time to carry through.

Public-House Valuation.

Mr. HICKS BEACH (Gloucestershire, Tewkesbury): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he is aware that in December, 1902, under reference H. J. 1901, Fo. 2997–5397, a public-house was valued at Somerset House on the following basis, fourteen years at present net rent of £148 per annum £1,580, estimated value of house at end of fourteen years £300 per annum, twenty-five years purchase on £300 £7,500, value at end of fourteen years ·578 of such sum £4,335, making a total of £5,915, less *ex gratia* allowance of £215, value on which duty paid £5,700; whether the above case was in accordance with the usual practice of assessment of values of licences at Somerset House; and whether, if the Licensing Bill passes in its present form, any allowance will be made in cases where death duties have been assessed on the above lines.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) The facts of the case referred to are approximately as stated. The value for Estate Duty of licensed property, as of all other property, is the market value at the date of death, and the calculations referred to by the hon. Member were regarded as suitable in the particular case for the purpose of ascertaining that value. Valuations so arrived at in the past in accordance with the provisions of The Finance Act, 1894, are not subject to subsequent adjustment in the event either of a rise or of a fall in market value occurring at a later date, whether such rise or fall may be due to legislation or to other causes, and there is consequently no ground for making any such allowance as is suggested in the Question in respect of transactions which are now closed. As regards the future, licensed properties passing at death will continue to be valued for Estate Duty on the basis of current market prices, and any depreciation which has taken or may take place in those prices will be fully reflected in the Estate Duty valuations.

Coal Exports.

MR. HICKS BEACH: To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer what was the total quantity of coal exported from the United Kingdom in 1907, including the estimated coal equivalent of coke and patent fuel.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*)

A Statement of the Total Quantity of Coal exported from the United Kingdom in the year 1907, including the estimated Coal equivalent of Coke and Patent Fuel.

(1.) Coal exported.	(2) Coke exported.	(3.) Coal equivalent of Coke exported.*	(4.) Patent fuel exported.	(5.) Coal contained in patent fuel exported.†	(6.) Coal shipped for the bunkers of steamers engaged in Foreign trade.‡	(7.) Total coal shipped. Columns, 1, 3, 5 and, 6.
Tons.	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.	Tons.
63,600,947	981,418	1,635,697	1,480,893	1,332,804	18,618,828	85,188,276

* The figures under Column 3 have been computed on the assumption that for every 60 tons of coke exported 100 tons of coal were consumed in its manufacture.

† The patent fuel exported has been assumed to contain 90 per cent. of coal, the remaining 10 per cent. consisting mainly of pitch.

‡ The figures given under this heading relate to the coal shipped on board British and foreign passenger and cargo steamers bound for foreign ports.

The estimates as to the coal equivalent of the coke exported and as to the coal contained in patent fuel have been made on the basis adopted by the Royal Commission on Coal Supplies in their Final Report (*see* Command Paper 2353, page 27).

Subsidy for Cultivation of Beet Sugar.

MR. FELL (Great Yarmouth): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer if he can now assist the proposals to attempt the growth of sugar beet and the manufacture of sugar in this country by promising not to impose any excise duty upon sugar which may be produced here.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) No, Sir.

Convictions for Drunkenness in England and Wales.

SIR HENRY KIMBER (Wandsworth): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether his attention has been drawn to the statements in the Blue-Book issued by the Home Office, Licensing Statistics, 1907 [Cd. 3951], that while the convictions for drunkenness in England and Wales for the years 1905, 1906, and 1907 show a steady decline in proportion to population, the convictions in the year 1907 being 56·40 per 10,000 persons, yet when England is taken separately from Wales the proportion is 44·21 per 10,000 persons in English divisions as against 119·48 in Welsh non-county boroughs; and whether he can state any reasons for this disproportion, seeing that Sunday closing is adopted in Wales and not in England.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) I beg to answer this Question on behalf of my right hon. friend. I am afraid the hon. Member has confused two sets of calculations given in the Blue-book, namely, figures based on the estimated population of 1907 and those based on the Census of 1901, and he has also placed side by side for comparison two different kinds of areas, namely, English petty sessional divisions, which are largely rural, and Welsh non-county boroughs, which are urban in character. It is, however, true that convictions for drunkenness in Wales are, generally speaking, at a higher rate than those in England. Thus, according to the population at the last census, the English convictions were 60·33 per 10,000, while the Welsh were 65·15. Too much stress must not be laid upon the figures of convictions, and there may be many explanations of any differences that are shown to exist between one place and another. But it may be observed that the proportion of on-licences to population is higher in Wales than it is in England. In Wales it is 35·43 per 10,000, and in England 29·69.

Pay of Indian Medical Officers.

MR. REES (Montgomery Boroughs): To ask the Under-Secretary of State for India, if he is aware that since the introduction of the new scale of pay for Indian medical service officers in charge of gaols there are, at any rate in the Madras Presidency, uncovenanted officers of long service in charge of central gaols who do the same administrative work as medical officers in charge of central gaols, but who have not been placed on the same scale of pay for their administrative work; and will he consider whether this difference should be removed and these officers be put on the same scale of pay as medical officers in administrative charge of gaols, in so far as administrative and not medical duties are concerned.

(*Answered by Mr. Buchanan.*) The recent improvement of the pay of members of the Indian medical service in charge of gaols was part of a general improvement of the pay of that service introduced with a view to making the service more attractive and securing more and better qualified recuits. The same considerations do not apply in the case of the officers referred to in the Question, who are not members of the Indian medical service and whose rates of pay are determined by the conditions of their own service. The Secretary of State does not, as at present advised, see sufficient reason to take any action in the matter, which is primarily one for the consideration of the Government of India.

Date of Indian Budget.

MR. REES: To ask the Under-Secretary of State for India whether he can now say on what date the Indian Budget will be taken?

(*Answered by Mr. Buchanan.*) It is impossible at present to fix a date at which the Indian Budget will be taken.

Evicted Tenants—Case of Mr. Patrick Kidney.

MR. WILLIAM ABRAHAM (Cork County, N.E.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Estates Commissioners have considered the application of Mr. Patrick Kidney, an evicted tenant, for reinstatement in his former holding at Britway, Castlelyons, on the Sherlock Estate, County Cork; and if the Commissioners, having regard to all the circumstances of the case, intend to apply the compulsory powers they possess, or take such other action as may be found most expedient to effect the reinstatement of the evicted tenant.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The Estates Commissioners consider the applicant to be a suitable person to be provided with a holding if one can be found for him, and they have referred the case to their inspector with the object of procuring a holding for the purpose, if possible. The evicted farm is in the occupation of a yearly tenant.

Committal of Alexander Jennings to Meath Industrial School.

CAPTAIN CRAIG (Down, E.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that a boy named Alexander Jennings was committed to the Meath Industrial School at Blackrock, County Dublin, on 29th June, 1907, for the first offence, without the knowledge of his father, James A. Jennings, of 85, Island Street, Newtownards Road, Belfast; and whether, in view of the fact that the Lord-Lieutenant has been memorialised by the father for the release of his son, who is willing to give ample security for his future good behaviour, he will order his discharge.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The case has come before me on several occasions upon the petition of the father for the boy's release. The father is stated to be a respectable hard-working man, but he appears to have been unable to exercise due control over his son who, according to the evidence, was drifting into crime.

In the circumstances I am satisfied that it would not be in the boy's own interest to discharge him. He is in a fair way to do well in the industrial school.

Proposed Irish Universities—Representation of the Methodist Church.

SIR JOHN RANDLES (Cumberland, Cockermouth): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland how many representatives of the Methodist Church will be members of the Senates of the proposed Universities; and will he secure that the Methodist Church shall be adequately represented thereon.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) Though I have no knowledge of the fact, I am informed that two of the persons whom it is contemplated to nominate to the first Senate of the University to have its seat in Belfast are members of the Methodist Church. None of the persons suggested for membership of the first Senate of the University to have its seat in Dublin are members of that Church. I think that the provisions of the Bill will secure that students who belong to the Methodist Church or to any other Church are eligible for all the advantages of the proposed Universities and Colleges, and I see no reason for adding to the Senate in the manner suggested.

SIR JOHN RANDLES: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the Committee of the Methodist Church in Ireland are of opinion that the privileges which the Methodist Church has enjoyed in connection with the Royal University appear to be curtailed by his Bill; and will he give consideration to their representations with a view to removing what they regard as hardship and injustice.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) I have received from the Committee on public questions, rights, and privileges, of the Methodist Church in Ireland a series of resolutions, one of which represents that the privileges which the Methodist Church has enjoyed in connection with the Royal University appear to be curtailed by the Irish Universities Bill. I am not aware of any privileges enjoyed by the Methodist Church in the Royal University, nor do the representations which have reached me indicate how the changes which are proposed will specially affect the members of the Methodist Church.

Retirement of Sir Antony Macdonnell.

MR. LONSDALE (Armagh, Mid.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether Sir Antony Macdonnell has resigned the office of Under-Secretary; and, if so, whether he is in a position to name his successor.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) Sir Antony Macdonnell has not resigned his office, but some time ago he communicated to the Irish Government his desire to retire after the presentation of the Report of Lord Dudley's Commission. The Report has, I believe, been signed, and will be presented in a few days. I have, however, requested Sir Antony Macdonnell to defer his retirement for such a time as will enable me to have the great benefit of his advice in the consideration of this Report, and he has therefore been good enough to agree to remain in office until the end of July. It is proposed when the office becomes vacant to fill it by the appointment of Sir James Dougherty, the Assistant-Under-Secretary.

Irish University Bill.

CAPTAIN CRAIG: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the resolution passed at a special meeting of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland at Belfast on Wednesday, 29th April, condemning the University Bill; and whether, in view of that and other influential expressions of opinion against the endowment by the State of a Roman Catholic University in Dublin and a Presbyterian University in Belfast, he intends to drop the measure.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The Answer to the first part of the Question is that I have seen the resolution referred to; to the second part, that I do not admit that the proposals before the House are accurately described in the language used by the hon. and gallant Member, and that I intend to proceed with the Bill.

Sligo Board of Guardians—Speech of Mr. John Gilmartin.

CAPTAIN CRAIG: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been drawn to a speech delivered on Saturday, 25th April last, at a meeting of the Sligo Board of Guardians, by a Mr. John Gilmartin, chairman, in the course of which he stated that, as long as he lived he would keep that old shot until they shot Captain Bryan Cooper, High Sheriff of County Sligo; and what steps, if any, he intends to take to put a stop to such speeches at meetings of Nationalist county councils.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The words set out in the Question are quoted from a newspaper report of a speech stated to have been delivered by Mr. Gilmartin, but I have no information as to whether the report is correct or not. However foolish and objectionable the language quoted may be, it is obvious from the context that, if used, it was not used in a literal sense, and that fact must, I think, be clear to anyone who reads the report. The matter is not worthy of notice.

Attack on Mr. C. G. Mahon at Dysart.

CAPTAIN CRAIG: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that Mr. Charles Gabbett Mahon was recently shot at and wounded when visiting one of his farms at Dysart, a few miles from Ennis; can he give the House any information regarding the outrage; have any arrests been made; and is adequate protection being afforded against future attempts on his life.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) On the evening of 26th April Mr. Mahon was fired at when driving home from one of his farms, and was slightly injured in the head by two grains of shot. He drove rapidly on and did not see his assailants, and he is consequently unable to assist the police in their efforts to discover them. No arrests have been made. The police will afford all necessary protection to Mr. Mahon.

Reinstatement of Templemore Evicted Tenants.

MR. FFRENCH (Wexford, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the Templemore evicted tenants were led to believe that they would be restored to their homes last autumn; whether any progress has since been made; and if the Estates Commissioners can give any definite statement as regards the time of their restoration.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The Estates Commissioners have received applications from five evicted tenants on the Templemore estate. In two of the cases the Commissioners are negotiating for the purchase of the holdings with the object of reinstating the evicted tenants; in one case the Commissioners will provide the evicted tenant with a new holding if one can be found for him; and in the two remaining cases the Commissioners have decided to take no action. The Commissioners cannot name a definite date when the outstanding cases will be disposed of.

Irish Evicted Tenants—Case of John Keating on the Ely Estate.

MR. FFRENCH: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that John Keating was evicted by a middleman named Gahan, who is a purchasing tenant on the Ely estate; whether Gahan bought his own holding at twenty-seven years purchase and would not sell to Keating at the same price; and if the Estates Commissioners will see that this man's little holding is restored to him.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The applicant held as a sub-tenant, and his case therefore does not come under the provisions of the Acts relating to the reinstatement of evicted tenants. The Estates Commissioners have no power to interfere in the matter.

Cattle-driving—Speech by Mr. J. Keaveney at Tulsk.

CAPTAIN CRAIG: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been drawn to the speech delivered on Sunday, 19th April last, at a public meeting in Tulsk, County Roscommon, by a Mr. J. Keaveney, in the course of which he recommended the people to keep up the fight wherever there was a grazier or rancher, let them make the place a small little hell for him, let the young men show fight and they would make it hot for England; whether Keaveney is a Justice of the Peace; and, if so, has the attention of the Lord Chancellor of Ireland been called to this incitement to cattle-driving; and what action, if any, the Law Officers have taken.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) My attention has been called to a newspaper report of a speech said to have been delivered by Mr. Keaveney to the effect stated in the Question. Mr. Keaveney is a Justice of the Peace *ex officio*. The matter has been brought to the notice of the Lord Chancellor and is under his consideration. No other action has been taken in the case.

Intimidation of Mr. Robert Boyle.

MR. LONSDALE: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the statement of Mr. Robert Boyle to an inspector of the Local Government Board, at an inquiry under the Labourers Act, at Cashel, on 18th April, that he had been boycotted for the last fourteen years, that his cattle had been maimed and poisoned, a house on his farm was burned, and he was refused supplies by the local shop-keepers, while he had received a letter telling him that he would be shot; and whether this man is under police protection.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) I am informed that, at the inquiry referred to, Mr. Boyle made a statement to the effect mentioned in the Question. It is the fact that Mr. Boyle was boycotted and in receipt of police protection for a number of years, but he is not now under protection, and the police have no knowledge of any recent act of boycotting or intimidation against him.

Recommendations of Belfast Health Commission.

MR. J. DEVLIN (Belfast, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Leutenant of Ireland what steps, if any, are being taken to give effect to the recommendations of the Belfast Health Commission.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The Report of the Commission, which reached the Local Government Board on 10th April, is receiving the serious consideration of the Board, who have forwarded copies to the Belfast Corporation with a request that a special meeting of the Corporation should be summoned to consider it.

Erection of Labourers Cottages.

MR. J. DEVLIN: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state the number of labourers cottages applied for and erected under the Labourers Acts in the Parliamentary Divisions of North Antrim, Mid Antrim, East Antrim, North Armagh, Mid Armagh, North Down, West Down, East Down, North Fermanagh, North Derry, and South Derry.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The particulars asked for in the Question are not available by parliamentary divisions, but the Returns which district councils are now furnishing in pursuance of Sec. 30 of The Labourers Act, 1906, will show the required information up to 31st March last by rural districts, and as soon as these Returns are completed the information relating to any particular rural districts can be supplied to the hon. Member, if that will meet his wishes.

Funeral of Second Corporal C. H. Dillon, Royal Engineers.

MR. ARTHUR LEE (Hampshire, Fareham): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether Second-Corporal C. H. Dillon, Royal Engineers, who was engaged on the Government Ordnance Survey, and who died, whilst so employed, on 23rd February, of malarial fever previously contracted on active service, was buried at Botley, Hants, on 26th February without military honours; and whether application was made by the friends of the deceased to the military authorities, who refused to provide military honours on the score of expense, and who declined even to send a guncarriage from Netley, only four miles away, on the ground that the distance was too great.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The General Officer Commanding in

Chief, Southern Command, has been requested to forward a Report on this matter.

Archbishopric of Cyprus — Delay in making Appointment.

MR. YOXALL (Nottingham, W.): To ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he is able to give any information as to the causes of the delay in electing a prelate to fill the vacant Archbishopric of Cyprus; and whether His Majesty's Government are able to report the results of the friendly intervention of the High Commissioner of Cyprus, with a view of terminating the interregnum which has already existed for eight years in connection with the vacant see.

(*Answered by Colonel Seely.*) The delay in electing an Archbishop of Cyprus has been caused by the inability of the Holy Synod, with which the arrangements for the election have usually rested, to agree upon the method of procedure. It has been the object of the High Commissioner, under the instructions of His Majesty's Government, to abstain as far as possible from intervention in this ecclesiastical dispute; but, in order to bring to an end a condition of things which is fraught with danger to the good order and prosperity of the island, it has been decided that the Government of Cyprus should give its support to a Bill which is being prepared by the Greek elected members of the legislative council providing for the election of an archbishop in accordance with the ancient customs of the Church of Cyprus.

Compulsory Acquisition of Crown Lands for Small Holdings.

LORD WILLOUGHBY DE ERESBY (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): To ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the Board of Agriculture, if Crown Lands, or lands belonging to the Duchy of Lancaster, can be acquired compulsorily by county councils for small holdings.

(*Answered by Sir Edward Strachey.*) The compulsory provisions of the Small Holdings and Allotments Act are not applicable to lands belonging to the Crown and the Duchy of Lancaster.

Duty on Lumber shipped from United States to France.

MR. HOLT (Northumberland, Hexham): To ask the Secretary to the Board of Trade if lumber shipped from the United States to France is liable to an extra duty in France if trans-shipped in Hong Kong or any other British Colony; and if so, whether, in view of the present friendly relations between this country and France, the Government will make representations to the French Government, with a view to procuring the removal of a tax which is injurious to the transit trade of our Colonies.

(*Answered by Secretary Sir Edward Grey.*) Lumber shipped from the United States to France is dutiable at the rates provided in the French minimum tariff if imported either directly or *via* a country which itself enjoys the minimum tariff. In other cases it is subject to the full general tariff rates. Neither Hong Kong nor any other British Colony is entitled to the application of the French minimum tariff as a whole. His Majesty's Government could not properly suggest to the French Government that they should accord to United States products privileges in excess of those actually accorded in virtue of existing conventions between the United States and France.

Imports of Acetone.

MR. BELLAIRS: To ask the Secretary to the Board of Trade whether he can state, for the last two years for which the statistics are available, the number of tons of acetone imported into the United Kingdom, together with the chief countries of origin.

(*Answered by Mr. Kearley.*) No separate record is kept of the imports of acetone into this country, and no statistics are therefore available.

Postal Deliveries at Limavady.

MR. BARRIE (Londonderry, N.): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that there is only one daily delivery of mails to houses situate within 1¼ mile from the Post Office at Limavady, a town of some 2,800 inhabitants; whether there are several houses and premises, each of over £100 annual valuation, on the road leading from Limavady to Dungiven within 1¼ mile from the Post Office, and whose occupants have considerable business and personal correspondence; whether he is aware that the English and Scottish mails are not delivered at such residences until twenty-two hours after their receipt in Limavady; and whether steps will be taken to provide a second daily delivery within such a radius, seeing that in the County Kildare there is a second daily delivery to houses two miles beyond the nearest village of only 800 inhabitants.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) I will have inquiry made on the subject, and will send the hon. Member a reply.

Local Stamping Office for Norwich.

MR. TILLETT (Norwich): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he is aware that an application from the Norfolk and Norwich Law Society for the establishment of a local stamping office has been refused; and will he explain why the facilities already granted to towns of the size of Derby and York cannot be extended to the city of Norwich, whose population exceeds 120,000.

(*Answered by Mr. Hobhouse.*) The great bulk of the documents sent up from Norwich for stamping consists of large batches of forms to be impressed with the duty of 1d. Stamping of this kind requires the installation of power machinery on a large scale, and the provision of the ordinary stamping machines in use at provincial offices would not enable it to be done locally. The ordinary stamping work at Norwich is not sufficient to justify the extension to that city of the facilities granted to the other places referred to by the hon. Member.

Stow Union—Surcharge for Outdoor Relief.

MR. BENNETT (Oxfordshire, Woodstock): To ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he is aware that a Local Government Board auditor recently surcharged a relieving officer of the guardians of Stow Union in respect of relief given by order of the Stow Board to a widow with two children, aged ten and eight, dependent on her; will he say what was the total income of the widow and children, and what was the amount of relief per week given for each child; whether the ground of the auditor's decision was that there were three sons of the widow living in the house who, in the auditor's opinion, could afford to keep the children; what were the earnings of the sons, and were they always in work; whether the sons were liable by statute to maintain their brothers, and, if not, whether the Local Government Board had made any order altering or extending 43 Eliz. so as to make persons of sufficient ability liable to keep their brothers and sisters; whether the Local Government Board considered that the three elder brothers had a living wage left after keeping their younger brothers as well as their mother; and what sum did the auditor reckon as sufficient for food and clothing of each child.

(*Answered by Mr. John Burns.*) I am aware of the case referred to. The woman is stated to have been housekeeper for her sons, five of whom lived at home. They earned £2 10s. a week and contributed 26s. a week towards the household expenses, besides paying the rent of the house. Three of them also assisted in providing clothing for the mother and two of the younger sons. The amount of the relief given was 3s. a week. The auditor stated as his reasons for his decision: (1) That there was no evidence of destitution laid before the guardians at the time the said relief was ordered to be given, and, as a fact, the said pauper was not in a destitute condition at that time or during the currency of the order and was not therefore a proper subject for the receipt of outdoor relief; (2) that there is no authority in law for administering the said relief or charging the amount of the same in the accounts of the relieving officer. The earnings of the three elder of the sons living at home amounted to 41s. a week when they were in full employ, but it is stated that their work is not constant; they lose on wet and short days. The sons were not liable to maintain their brothers, and no order of the Local Government Board has been made of the kind referred to in the Question. The auditor did not express any opinion as to what sum was sufficient for the food and clothing of each child. He came to the conclusion that the case was not one of destitution requiring relief out of the poor rate, and the Board concurred in this view.

Unfunded Debt.

Mr. ASHTON (Bedfordshire, Luton): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer what is the present amount of the Unfunded Debt; of what issues does it consist and what Exchequer bonds are now current issued for capital expenditure and classed among other capital liabilities; and what was the amount of the like issues at the same time last year.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) I must ask my hon. friend to postpone his Question until after the introduction of the Budget.

Case of Mr. C. W. Allan, Indian Forest Service.

Sir SEYMOUR KING (Hull, Central): To ask the Under-Secretary of State for India whether the Secretary of State's attention has been directed to the Memorial addressed to him of Mr. C. W. Allan, an extra Deputy Conservator of Forests in the Burma provincial service; whether Mr. Allan, after passing through the college at Dehra Dun joined the Indian forest service on 1st February, 1887, at a time when it was provided by Section 21 of the then Forest Department Code that after five years approved service as Sub-assistant Conservator of Forests he would be drafted into the upper controlling staff; whether, in 1891, the Government issued a new Forest Department Reorganisation Scheme debarring all officers thenceforward appointed in India from promotion to the upper controlling staff, and whether, having done four years of admittedly approved service, the new scheme was by *ex post facto* ruling arbitrarily applied to Mr. Allan's case; whether recently the Secretary of State for India has sanctioned the transfer of Mr. Shrish Chandra Chakrabatti from the provincial to the Imperial engineering service on the ground that, as he had actually entered the Sibpur Engineering College before the issue of the orders closing the Imperial service to students of Indian Engineering Colleges, he had an equitable right to an appointment in the Imperial service; on what ground, in an analogous case, Mr. Allan has been refused similarly equitable treatment; and whether the Government of India will be directed to remedy the injustice from which Mr. Allan is suffering.

(*Answered by Mr. Buchanan.*) The memorial in question has not yet reached me from the Government of India, through whom under rule it has to be submitted, and consequently, I am not in a position to express any opinion on the merits of the question. I assume that the memorial will shortly be in the hands of the Secretary of State.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Naval Accidents.

Mr. ARTHUR LEE (Hampshire, Fareham): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether it is anticipated that any of the three war vessels recently lost, viz., H.M.S. "Gladiator," H.M.S. "Tiger," and H.M.S. "Gala," can be salved and restored to a condition of fighting efficiency; and, if not, what steps will be taken by His Majesty's Government to replace these vessels and to maintain unimpaired the fighting strength of the Navy.

The FIRST LORD of the ADMIRALTY (Mr. McKenna, Monmouthshire, N.): Salvage operations on H.M.S. "Gladiator" are being carried out; but no opinion can yet be formed as to her ultimate condition. It is not proposed to attempt to salve either H.M. ships "Tiger" or "Gala." While our ship construction is not on so narrow a margin as to render any immediate action imperative, yet in view of an exceptional opportunity for replacement on most advantageous terms having presented itself, the Board are now considering the question.

Mr. ARTHUR LEE: May I ask whether, in view of the officially recognised deficiency in modern torpedo destroyers, the Government will increase the present year's programme of those vessels from sixteen to eighteen, in order that the minimum provision considered necessary before these disasters took place may not be reduced?

MR. MCKENNA: The question is obviously one for discussion in debate on the Estimates.

Submarine Boats—Safety Arrangements.

MR. ARTHUR LEE: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether the Admiralty has recently adopted the Siebe-Gorman apparatus for enabling the crews of foundered submarine boats to escape to the surface; if so, whether steps are being taken to supply this device as rapidly as possible to the crews of all submarine boats now in the service; and how many sets of this apparatus have already been issued and how many are to be supplied during the current financial year.

MR. MCKENNA: Various safety arrangements are being tested and the most suitable will be adopted.

MR. ARTHUR LEE: May I ask if it is the case that in the original contracts for Class C submarines now being built this provision has been ordered as part of the contract? Is any provision being made for the forty-five boats with crews of 500 men already in the service?

MR. MCKENNA asked for notice of the Question.

The Navy.

MAJOR ANSTRUTHER-GRAY (St. Andrews Burghs): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty what steps are being taken to replace the ships recently lost in His Majesty's Navy.

MR. MCKENNA: I must refer the hon. Member to the reply I have just given to the hon. Member for Fareham.

Transport for War Times.

MR. HOLT (Northumberland, Hexham): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether, in order to protect the national exchequer against having to pay extortionate sums for transports, as was the case during the late war in South Africa, he will consider the desirability of acquiring powers for the compulsory hiring of merchant ships during war time at a price to be fixed subsequently by arbitration.

MR. MCKENNA: The present system of competition and negotiation is preferable from an executive point of view, and it is doubtful whether any economy would result from such a change as that suggested. In view of the large amount of tonnage required about the same time, and the urgency of the service, the Admiralty cannot agree that the sums paid were extortionate.

Torpedo Destroyers.

MR. THORNTON (Clapham): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty when the sixteen new torpedo destroyers promised in this year's Naval Programme will be completed; and how many destroyers of eleven years of age will be possessed by Germany and Great Britain, respectively, at the date of these British vessels being commissioned.

MR. MCKENNA: Under normal conditions the sixteen new destroyers will be completed about July, 1910. I am unaware what importance the hon. Member attaches to the period of eleven years, but the Board of Admiralty know of no circumstances which would make this an appropriate period for purposes of comparison, and we consider it inexpedient to submit any figures which would imply an official endorsement of such an age period.

MR. ARTHUR LEE: Is not the depreciation put in the official Estimates at five per cent. for eleven years?

MR. MCKENNA: No, Sir. The figures he refers to are in reference to torpedo boats. The destroyers are not included under that head. They come under the gunboats heading.

Protection of Scottish Fisheries.

MR. MORTON (Sutherland): On behalf of the hon. Member for Ross and Cromarty, I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty, in view of the inability of the cruisers at the command of the Fishery Board for Scotland efficiently to protect the interests of line fishermen around the coast of Scotland against the depredations of illegal trawling, will he consider the expediency of detailing one or more additional Admiralty cruisers for sea-police duties in the Moray Firth and off the North-West Coast of Scotland.

Mr. McKENNA: My hon. friend must not of course expect me to admit the preamble to his Question. It is not in contemplation to detail additional cruisers of His Majesty's Navy for the duties referred to.

Navigation of the Solent.

Mr. FELL (Great Yarmouth): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty if, having regard to the fact of the numerous collisions that have taken place in the Solent, and to the losses that have taken place there of His Majesty's ships of war, and to the fact that no authority has any jurisdiction there, he will consider the question of the advisability of extending the western limits of the dockyards at Portsmouth to the Needles.

Mr. McKENNA: The question has already been considered, and it is not at present deemed desirable to extend the limits of the dockyard port.

Mr. FELL: Is it the opinion of the Admiralty that this portion of inland waters is a kind of "no man's land," no authority having any jurisdiction or control over it? Will the Admiralty under these circumstances reconsider the question?

Mr. McKENNA: I have already replied to the latter part of the Question.

Cordite for the Navy.

Mr. BELLAIRS (Lynn Regis): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether it is intended to issue cordite containing mercuric chloride to His Majesty's ships in the event of war.

Mr. McKENNA: Should any such cordite which had passed the prescribed tests be available and be required during war time it would most certainly be issued.

Mr. BELLAIRS: Will the right hon. Gentleman tell us how much of this cordite there is in stock and in reserve?

Mr. McKENNA asked that the Question should be put on the Paper.

Cordite Tests.

Mr. BELLAIRS: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether the new silvered vessel test for cordite is of a very confidential character; and, if not, whether he can see his way to circulate a description of it with the Votes.

Mr. McKENNA: There is nothing confidential in this test. A description is already published in the Corrections to the Army Ordnance Regulations, which is on sale to the public.

Lord R. CECIL (Marylebone, E.): Is this the test that was approved by Lord Rayleigh's Committee?

Mr. McKENNA: I am not sure; I should like notice of that Question.

The Attestation Oath.

*Mr. ASHLEY (Lancashire, Blackpool): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War, if he will state why, in the oath which the Territorial soldier has to take on joining, the words defining the limits within which he has undertaken to serve have not been inserted, in view of the fact that such words were inserted in the old Volunteer oath.

The SECRETARY of STATE for WAR (Mr. Haldane, Haddington): A member of the Volunteer Force enrolled under the old oath, if volunteering for service abroad, was obliged to be regularly enlisted for such service. This gave rise to considerable difficulties during the South African War. The new form of oath has been drawn up to avoid the necessity for such re-attestation. It has been made quite clear in the form of attestation that the liability undertaken extends to the United Kingdom only, and not to any place outside it except by voluntary undertaking.

*Mr. ASHLEY pointed out the danger of misapprehension in view of the fact that the liability appears only in the Schedule of the oath and not in the oath itself.

Mr. HALDANE: The man is fully informed when he takes the oath.

Militia and Volunteer Officers.

Mr. ASHLEY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War how many officers have left the Militia and Volunteers, respectively, during the twelve months ending 31st March; and how many officers have joined the forces named during the same period.

MR. HALDANE: 282 officers left the Militia, and 260 joined that force during the period specified. 619 combatant officers left the Volunteers, and 546 joined the force during the same period.

Ranges for the Territorial Artillery.

MR. ASHLEY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War under what Parliamentary authority it is contemplated to use the Public Works Loans Fund for the provision of ranges for the Territorial Artillery; when issues for this purpose will be made by the Public Works Loans Commissioners; and upon what property they will be secured.

MR. HALDANE: It is proposed to include in the Public Works Loans Bill this year a clause enabling the Public Works Loans Commissioners to lend money to County Associations for the purposes of the Territorial and Reserve Forces Act. Issues can be made, if occasion arises, by the Commissioners when they have been empowered to lend money to County Associations. Such issues will be secured upon the land and the general revenue of a County Association with the consent of the Army Council.

MR. ASHLEY: Are we to understand there is no personal liability on the members of the Association?

MR. HALDANE: That is so.

MR. ASHLEY: It is corporate?

MR. HALDANE: Yes.

Army Establishment.

MR. ASHLEY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War why the establishment and strength of the Army on the British establishment, stated by him on the 6th April to be 157,958 and 153,755, respectively, are shown in the Army Estimates (page 11) as 169,114 and 161,302 respectively.

MR. HALDANE: The figures given on the 6th April referred to the number of non-commissioned officers and men on the 1st March, 1908. The figures shown on page 11 of the Army Estimates referred to the number of all ranks on the 1st January, 1908.

*MR. ASHLEY: Is the Army therefore now short by 3,600 officers?

MR. HALDANE: No; there is no material change. There has always been a shortage.

Home Infantry Establishment.

MR. ASHLEY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether his attention has been called to the fact that in the Return showing the actual strength of the Infantry battalions and depots on the home establishment on the 1st March last, issued on the Motion of Viscount Midleton, a deficit of 7,520 men is shown; whether this deficit has now been made good in whole or in part; and, if in part only, to what extent and by what means.

MR. HALDANE: Apparently the hon. Member is alluding to Cd. 3802 which gave figures for the 1st February and not for the 1st March. His figures are not understood—but probably he has not noticed that the Return is for rank and file only and does not include old soldiers at the depots. The actual deficit of non-commissioned officers and men in line battalions and depots at home on the 1st March was 3,716, and this deficit had, on the 1st April, been reduced by 1,259, this reduction being irrespective of alterations in establishment.

Field Artillery Brigades.

MAJOR ANSTRUTHER-GRAY: (St. Andrews Burghs): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he will consider the desirability of stiffening the field artillery brigades of the Territorial Army with a proportion of Regulars in addition to the permanent staff, say eight drivers and eight horses per battery.

MR. HALDANE: Permission has recently been granted to County Associations to enlist ex-soldiers of horse and field artillery up to the age of thirty-six. It is hoped that the ranks of the field batteries will thereby be stiffened with expert drivers and gunners, who would also assist in the instruction of the ordinary Territorial soldier. The numbers already granted for the permanent staff to be found from the Regular horse and field artillery amounts to 378. We do not propose to make any alteration in this, and it will be time enough to discuss it when the scheme has received a fair trial.

Mr. ARTHUR LEE asked the right hon. Gentleman to answer the last part of the Question referring to the horses for these batteries.

Mr. HALDANE said it was intended to supply the trained horses that were necessary. If there was any shortage the matter would be reconsidered.

Mr. ARTHUR LEE: Are the horses to go round the different batteries, or will individual batteries have their own horses?

Mr. HALDANE: Individual batteries will have their own horses. It is a very bad plan for different batteries to use the same set of horses.

Artillery Brigade Training.

Major ANSTRUTHER-GRAY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he will consider the advisability of training brigades on a four-gun basis with the same establishment of men and horses that are allotted to batteries of the expeditionary force.

Mr. HALDANE: I think that the scheme of having brigades on a two-gun basis should first be given a fair trial. If the present provisional establishment of the training brigades proves not to be large enough to carry out the instructional duties allotted to them, it will then be time to consider increasing it. I may add that at present there has been no reduction of *personnel* in the Field Artillery in consequence of the formation of the training brigades.

Military Camps.

Mr. HICKS BEACH (Gloucestershire, Tewkesbury): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War how many troops have been under canvas in Great Britain during the month of April; and whether there is a King's regulation to the effect that no troops shall go under canvas before 1st May.

Mr. HALDANE: Under paragraph 1,362 King's regulations General Officers Commanding-in-Chief are permitted to approve the placing of troops under canvas before the 1st May. As these matters rest within their discretion no statistics of the character required by the Question are forwarded to the War Office.

Territorial Artillery Guns.

Mr. ASHLEY: On behalf of the hon. Member for the Rye Division of Sussex, I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether the Territorial Artillery are expected to be able to lay out lines of fire with the converted 15-pounder gun; and, if so, when the necessary directors, field plotters, dial sights, etc., will be provided.

Mr. HALDANE: The reply to the first part of the Question is in the affirmative. As regards the rest of the Question it is not practicable at present to give any definite date when it will be possible to issue the equipment mentioned.

Mr. CARLILE (Hertfordshire, St. Albans) asked if it were not the fact that the 15-pounders were found to be out of range——

*Mr. SPEAKER: Notice should have been given of that Question.

Garrison Artillery Volunteers.

Mr. ASHLEY: On behalf of the hon. Member for the Rye Division of Sussex, I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War when the old 40-pounder rifled breech-loading guns issued to garrison artillery Volunteers will be called in.

Mr. HALDANE: Instructions for the return of these guns to store were issued on the 15th ultimo.

Breech-loaders for the Territorial Artillery.

Mr. ASHLEY: On behalf of the hon. Member for the Rye Division of Sussex, I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War how many converted 15-pounder breech-loading guns have yet been issued to the Territorial Artillery for drill and instructional purposes: and when the necessary limbers, drill ammunition, and handbooks for use with these guns will be provided.

MR. HALDANE: Forty-seven guns have been issued. The limbers are about to be issued. Drill ammunition can be obtained on demand from the local Ordnance Officer. The handbook is in proof stage, and issue will be made as soon as possible.

MR. LEE: Can Members of the House be supplied with copies of the handbook?

MR. HALDANE: No doubt that can be done.

Territorial Field Artillery Adjutants.

MR. ASHLEY: On behalf of the hon. Member for the Rye Division of Sussex, I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether the work and the pay of the adjutants of the Territorial field artillery will be greater or less than that of adjutants of the late Volunteer artillery.

MR. HALDANE: The work of the adjutants will not be less than before. The pay will be less for new appointments, as being Field and not Garrison Artillery they will not receive the armament pay which was granted for the latter appointments. The rights of existing adjutants of Volunteer Royal Garrison Artillery will be preserved for the period of their original appointment.

Territorial Battalion Colours.

MR. ASHLEY: On behalf of the hon. Member for the Rye Division of Sussex, I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether battalions of the Territorial Force will carry colours.

MR. HALDANE: I hope this question will shortly be decided.

Territorial Battalion Bands.

MR. ASHLEY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether bands for the Territorial battalions will be part of their establishment as in the case of the late Volunteer force.

MR. HALDANE: An Infantry battalion of the Territorial Force includes sixteen bandsmen, who act as stretcher bearers in the field, and also sixteen drummers and buglers.

MR. ASHLEY: Are we to understand that the Territorial Infantry battalions will have their own bands?

MR. HALDANE: Yes, provision has been made for that.

Volunteer Establishment.

MR. H. H. MARKS (Kent, Thanet): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he can state how many members of the Volunteer Force were serving on the 31st March last, and how many of them have since enlisted in the Territorial Army.

MR. HALDANE: The strength of the Volunteer Force, exclusive of permanent staff and Honourable Artillery Company, on the 1st April was as follows:—

Officers - - -	8,645
Volunteers - -	215,572
Total - -	224,217

The Returns of the figures of those who have since enlisted in the Territorial Army are not yet sufficiently complete to enable me to publish them, but I hope they will be available very shortly.

Separation Allowances for Territorial Camps.

MR. GRETTON (Rutland): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War, if, for the purpose of promoting recruiting for the Territorial Forces, he will reconsider the advantages of paying a separation allowance to married privates in these forces during the annual encampment or in case of embodiment, as is already done in the case of non-commissioned officers.

MR. HALDANE: On embodiment all married privates will receive separation allowance. As regards camp, the grant to non-commissioned officers was made specially in order to give them special encouragement, and it is not proposed to extend this concession to the privates —a concession which would involve the State in an expenditure of £50,000 a year at the very least.

MR. GRETTON: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that difficulties in recruiting have arisen owing to the small pay for the married men?

MR. HALDANE: The arrangements are the same as for the Regular Army, and with the assistance provided by public bodies the difficulty can be overcome.

Law of Imprisonment in Natal.

MR. BELLOC (Salford, S.): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the law and practice of Natal permit imprisonment upon a general warrant containing no specific charge; and, if so, what other Colonies, if any, have effected this fundamental change in English law.

THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Colonel SEELY, Liverpool, Abercromby): The law and practice of Natal does not, as far as I am aware, permit of imprisonment on general warrants.

MR. BELLOC was understood to ask if Dinizulu was not imprisoned on a general warrant.

COLONEL SEELY: It depends on what the hon. Member means by a general warrant. If he means a warrant on which the crime is not specified that may be so, but in Dinizulu's case he is charged under an Ordinance which enables the arrest on a warrant in which the crime is not stated.

Indian Immigration in Natal.

*MR. REES (Montgomery Boroughs): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the Government of Natal proposes to introduce a Bill to control Indian immigration during the coming session; and whether or not in such Bill it is proposed to cancel the licences of Arab traders ten years hence, the State compensating the losers of such licences.

COLONEL SEELY: A statement to this effect has been made in the Press, but no official information has at present been received.

Canadian Immigration Regulations.

MR. REES: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the Government has information to the effect that the Government of Canada proposes to provide for the control of immigration under an amended regulation by reciprocal action between the country of citizenship and the country of destination.

COLONEL SEELY: No definite proposal of the kind indicated by my hon. friend has at present come before the Secretary of State.

National Sleeping Sickness Bureau.

*MR. REES: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the Government has decided to establish a national sleeping sickness bureau, with headquarters in London; whether a Convention between Great Britain and Germany for the prevention of the spread of this malady is contemplated; and whether he can give the House any information on this subject.

COLONEL SEELY: The Answer to the first two portions of my hon. friend's Question is in the affirmative. The Secretary of State hopes to be in a position to publish detailed information regarding the bureau shortly.

Expropriation of Lagos Natives.

MR. CATHCART WASON (Orkney and Shetland): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies if he is aware that the compulsory expropriation of natives at Lagos is viewed by the native population with alarm; and if, in order to allay any feeling of injustice that may exist, instructions will be given that land elsewhere will be granted to the expropriated natives.

COLONEL SEELY: I am in a position to inform my hon. friend that the feelings of the natives on this question have been exaggerated. The number affected is about 350, and liberal compensation for expropriation is being awarded to them. It is undoubtedly the policy of the Governor to meet the point raised by the hon. Member. There are large unoccupied areas in the neighbourhood of the town. Part of the land is already marked out into building sites and roads, and further land will be similarly marked out as soon as there is evidence of pressure of population.

Abeokuta Treaty.

MR. CATHCART WASON: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies if his attention has been called to the treaty of friendship and commerce made at Abeokuta between His Majesty's Government and the Alake on the 18th January, 1893, and also to the letters of the 29th June and 29th July, 1903, between the Alake and Sir W. M'Gregor on the question of tolls; and whether, in view of the fact that the Alake and his people consider the maintenance of the said tolls as essential to their independence, the Government will view with displeasure any attempts to abolish them.

COLONEL SEELY: My attention has been called to the treaty and letters referred to. His Majesty's Government would be glad, in the interests of trade, to see the tolls abolished, but they could not be abolished except by the substitution of some other arrangement which would provide the funds required for the government of the town and district, and would be acceptable to the native chiefs.

White Labour in the Transvaal Mines.

MR. FELL: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies if he can give any particulars of the recent experiment to introduce white labour into the Transvaal mines; and if he has any official information showing that of forty-five men engaged not one would continue work on the second day.

COLONEL SEELY: The Secretary of State has learnt from Lord Selborne, writing under date the 13th of April, that the result of the experiment has not been altogether satisfactory. A very large proportion of the men refused to undertake the work offered to them on the mines, and made it a grievance that they should be called upon to do work of the kind ordinarily done by Kaffirs, at the rate of pay ordinarily given to Kaffirs. The statement issued on 6th April by the Rand Unemployment Committee, who made the arrangements, shows that of the 395 men whom seventeen mines had agreed to take on 1st April, only 121 were still at work at the date of the last returns from the mines. The committee are not entirely discouraged by the first results of the employment of unskilled labour on the mines, yet they are disappointed that so large a proportion of the men sent to the mines should have either failed to appear or left the properties without giving the work a trial.

MR. FELL: Will Papers be laid, and will they show the rate of pay to the white labourers?

COLONEL SEELY: I could not without further inquiry say whether Papers relating to this matter will be laid on the Table of the House, but I shall be glad to give any information I can. The experiment now under discussion is merely an experiment with unemployed. It has no reference to the general question, about which the Government will be able to give further information later.

SIR GILBERT PARKER (Gravesend): Is it the case that white men were employed for exactly the same wages as Kaffirs?

COLONEL SEELY: I could not say offhand. I must, however, again point out that this experiment has taken place in connection with the question of unemployment.

MR. FELL: Were not the unemployed who were engaged in this attempt miners?

COLONEL SEELY: Not necessarily; a great many were not, for complaint was made that they could not earn as much by piece-work because they had no experience in the work.

SIR GILBERT PARKER: Will the hon. Gentleman give to the House the exact figures relating to the wages of the miners?

COLONEL SEELY said that, if the hon. Gentleman would put down a Question, he would see whether he could do so.

Cakijana.

MR. G. GREENWOOD (Peterborough): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether an application was made to the Supreme Court of Natal on behalf of the Zulu chief, Cakijana, for a habeas corpus to remove him from the jurisdiction of martial law to the jurisdiction of the Courts of Natal, where he surrendered; and what was the result of the application.

COLONEL SEELY: The Secretary of State is aware that such an application was made, and it would appear from Press telegrams to have been successful. The Governor has been requested to telegraph a summary of the decision of the Court.

Lord Rayleigh's Committee on Explosives.

MR. BELLAIRS: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether, in the interests of science and public safety, he will cause to be published the investigations and Report of Lord Rayleigh's Committee, which unanimously recommended the destruction of the seized blasting explosives containing mercuric chloride; or whether he can publish such parts as can be made public without detriment to the national interests.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. GLADSTONE, Leeds, W.): I should have no objection to publishing the terms of the resolution with regard to the seized blasting explosives, which the conference passed unanimously. With this exception there is nothing in the proceedings of the conference which could usefully be made public. If my hon. friend will put down an unstarred Question the terms of the Resolution shall be given in reply to it.

Select Committee on Police Day's Rest.

MR. REMNANT (Finsbury, Holborn): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he can now give the terms of the reference to, and the names of the members of, the Select Committee to deal with the question of one day's rest in seven for the members of the police force.

MR. GLADSTONE: I am afraid not, Sir; but I will do my best to get this settled within the week. Recent events have necessarily caused delay in this and other matters.

Carmarthen Prison.

MR. LLOYD MORGAN (Carmarthenshire, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he has received any communications from justices at quarter sessions with regard to a proposed order to dispense with female quarters at His Majesty's prison, Carmarthen; whether it is proposed to send in future all female prisoners from the three western counties of South Wales to Swansea instead of keeping them at Carmarthen prison; and whether, before making the order, he will consider the hardship which the proposed change would entail of sending prisoners to Swansea who are committed for trial from parts of Cardiganshire and Carmarthenshire, and also the additional cost to the ratepayers.

MR. GLADSTONE: I have received two communications to the effect indicated. The use of Carmarthen prison for the detention of female prisoners is found to be inconvenient and costly, and these objections will be obviated by the new arrangement which will save money to the taxpayers and throw no burden upon local rates, all expenses of the conveyance of prisoners being charged to Imperial funds. If the new arrangement is found to cause any substantial hardship to prisoners it can be reconsidered, but in view of the very small number of female prisoners received at Carmarthen from Cardiganshire and Carmarthen, I do not think this will be the case.

New Factory Inspectors.

MR. RAMSAY MACDONALD (Leicester): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he is now in a position to state the number of assistants to whom he has given nominations to enable them to sit for the examination about to be held for the appointment of new factory inspectors; and whether he proposes to make any modifications in the syllabus of subjects set for this examination.

MR. GLADSTONE: I have nominated two assistants to inspectorships in connection with the scheme for the augmentation of the staff. They have been appointed under the special powers in Clause 7 of the Order in Council of 4th June, 1870, after having passed a qualifying examination in the subjects of factory law and sanitary science; and will not be required to sit for the ordinary examination.

MR. RAMSAY MACDONALD: Were these two assistants men who passed the examination some time ago? Is it the fact that for the purpose of the increase of the staff no further nominations are to be given?

MR. GLADSTONE: They are the two who competed some time ago, and there are no further nominations.

Factory Inspectors' Qualifications.

MR. RAMSAY MACDONALD: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will inform the House how many men are now performing the duties of factory inspectors without having passed examinations in factory law and sanitation, and how many assistant factory inspectors have not qualified in these subjects.

MR. GLADSTONE: Eleven junior inspectors, appointed under the new scheme of examination, have not yet passed the deferred examination in factory law and sanitary science. As I have explained on previous occasions, inspectors are required to pass this examination at or before the end of their period of two years probation. Inspectors' assistants are not required to qualify in these subjects, but in their entrance examination they are required to show an elementary knowledge of the principal provisions of the law relating to workshops.

Fatal Accidents in Factories and Workshops.

MR. RAMSAY MACDONALD: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether his attention has been called to the number of fatal accidents in factories and workshops reported during March last, which show an increase of 20 per cent. on the number reported in March 1907; whether this increase has been going on steadily for some years; and whether he proposes to take any steps to find the causes of the increase with a view to diminishing it.

MR. GLADSTONE: I am aware of the figures referred to in the Question, which are prepared in my Department, but I do not think that too much importance should be attached to monthly fluctuations. I may point out to the hon. Member that the dock accidents for the same months show a very much larger percentage of decrease. So far as regards fatal accidents in factories and workshops the hon. Member is, I think, under some misapprehension. The number of these accidents has not, as he suggests, been steadily increasing for some years: on the contrary from 1900 to 1904 there was, with the exception of one year, a steady decline, and it was only the figures of last year that have gone back to the level of 1900. I am carefully investigating the whole question of the increase in the number of reported accidents under the Factory Act, and it will be dealt with by the Chief Inspector in the forthcoming annual Report.

Imprisonment of Manchester Unemployed Leaders.

MR. CLYNES (Manchester, N.E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he has called for and received a Report concerning the imprisonment, on a charge of conspiracy, of a number of leaders of the unemployed in Manchester; and, if so, whether he can now state if he is able to take steps to release the men or reduce the sentences.

MR. GLADSTONE: I have carefully considered these cases. I must point out that deliberate conspiracy to do damage, such as this was, differs widely from the ordinany case of window breaking by a tramp in order to secure a few nights lodging in prison. The case of Thompson is different from the others, but he was not convicted of conspiracy, and was sentenced to twelve months only in order that he might have the benefits of the special Borstal treatment. I regret that I see no reason for interference in any of the cases.

MR. CLYNES: Did the right hon. Gentleman in considering these cases take into account the fact that the witness on whose evidence the accused were mainly convicted, had himself been in prison twenty-four times?

MR. GLADSTONE: Yes, I took that into careful consideration, and I am satisfied that the Judge and jury also took it into consideration.

MR. LUPTON (Lincolnshire, Sleaford): Is it the fact that these men were sentenced to twelve months imprisonment for breaking one window?

MR. GLADSTONE: They were sentenced for conspiracy.

MR. LUPTON: Did they conspire to break one window?

MR. GLADSTONE: They broke a window of the value of £100.

Coal Mines (Eight Hours) Bill.

CAPTAIN CRAIG (Down, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the Government intends to drop the Coal Mines (Eight Hours) Bill; and, if not, will he issue a Memorandum explaining that it will not raise the price of coal, in view of the difficulties experienced by traders in contracting for future delivery.

MR. GLADSTONE: The Government has no intention of dropping the Bill. As regards the second part of the Question, I must refer the hon. Member to my printed Answer given to the hon. Member for Merthyr Tydfil on the 14th April.

MR. W. E. HARVEY (Derbyshire, N.E.): When will the Second Reading be taken?

MR. GLADSTONE: I cannot say.

MR. WATT (Glasgow, College): Is it the fact that only 25 per cent. of the miners will be affected by this Bill, the remaining 75 per cent. having already got eight hours?

MR. GLADSTONE: I do not agree with the proportions stated by my hon. friend.

Hamstead Colliery Disaster.

MR. MEYSEY-THOMPSON (Staffordshire, Handsworth): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether any steps are being taken by the Government to recognise the efforts made by the miners in the Hamstead Colliery and their Yorkshire colleagues to rescue those who were entombed, and lost their lives in the recent terrible disaster in that mine.

MR. GLADSTONE: Yes, Sir, the question is at the present moment under consideration, but I am not yet in a position to make any statement.

Aliens Act—Mr. Churchill's Pledge.

MR. CLAUDE HAY (Shoreditch, Hoxton): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what administrative measures he proposes to take to carry out the undertaking in reference to the Aliens Act, given on behalf of His Majesty's Government at Manchester by the President of the Board of Trade, to improve and alter the composition of immigration boards, the abolition of fees, as to interpretation and presentation of evidence; whether he proposes to provide at the public expense legal assistance to would-be immigrants, and whether he proposes to increase the number of interpreters; and, if so, how many interpreters will be appointed, and if he will state the salary to be given to each interpreter.

MR. GLADSTONE: As to the composition of the immigration boards, I am awaiting suggestions from those who are dissatisfied with the present membership, and I am also awaiting information as to the reasons for the suggestion that the attendance fee payable to members of the boards should be abolished. I have no reason to think that the number of interpreters requires increasing, but so far as officers under my control are concerned I am ready to take all possible steps to remedy any defect in the present arrangements for interpretation and presentation of evidence which may be proved to exist. The Aliens Act makes no provision for legal assistance to would-be immigrants at the public expense.

EARL WINTERTON (Sussex, Horsham): May I take it that the Answer to the Question whether the Home Secretary proposes to carry out the undertaking given by the President of the Board of Trade is in the negative?

MR. GLADSTONE: I have answered the Question, and the noble Lord must draw his own conclusions from my Answer.

MR. FELL: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he proposes to issue any new regulations or instructions under The Aliens Act, 1905; and, if so, whether an opportunity will be given for the discussion of their provisions before they come into force.

MR. GLADSTONE: I have nothing to add to the Answer given on my behalf on the 30th April.

MR. FELL: The right hon. Gentleman has not answered the last part of the Question.

MR. GLADSTONE: Any question relating to the administration of the

Aliens Act can be raised on the Home Office Vote.

Midwifery.

MR. EUGENE WASON (Clackmannan and Kinross): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he is aware that valuable lives of poor women are sometimes sacrificed in their confinement through the absence of a doctor, owing to their inability to pay the fee for his attendance; and whether the Local Government Board would so far vary their Circular of the 29th July last to the boards of guardians on the Midwives Act of 1902 as to make the payment of the doctor's fee compulsory by the guardians instead of permissive, as at present.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. JOHN BURNS, Battersea): The guardians are authorised by the Poor Law Amendment Act, 1848, to pay for any medical assistance rendered to a poor person on the happening of any sudden illness, although no order has been given for the same by the guardians or any of their officers, or by the overseers. Under this provision the guardians may pay the fee of any medical man called in on the advice of a midwife to attend a woman in childbirth in any case of difficulty. The Board are not empowered to alter this provision so as to make it compulsory. Under the regulations which are in force in most unions, however, it is compulsory upon the guardians to pay a fee to a Poor Law medical officer who is called on to attend a woman in childbirth by order of a person legally qualified to make the order. They must also pay the fee if under circumstances of difficulty or danger he visits without any order any such woman who is actually receiving relief or whom the guardians may subsequently decide to have been in a destitute condition.

Rateable Value of Licensed Premises.

MR. LEVERTON HARRIS (Tower Hamlets, Stepney): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board if he can state what is the present rateable value of licensed premises in England and Wales, and what is their present contribution towards local taxation.

MR. JOHN BURNS: The Returns made to the Local Government Board do not show the particulars referred to in the Question, and hence I am not in a position to give the information desired by the hon. Member.

Canadian Mail Contracts.

MR. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether, before entering into any contract with the Canadian Pacific Railway Company for the carriage of mails to Canada, he will give an opportunity to Irish Members to discuss it; whether he is aware that the Canadian Pacific Railway runs for a considerable distance through American territory and cannot therefore be described as all-British; is he aware that the Grand Trunk Pacific, which runs wholly through British territory, will in less than two years have a port at Prince Rupert, on the Pacific Coast, and that this port will be 500 miles nearer to Hong Kong than the present terminus of the Canadian Pacific Railway; and will he postpone entering into any arrangement with the Canadian Pacific Railway Company until such time as the Grand Trunk Pacific, which will be a faster and cheaper route, are in a position to tender for the contract.

MR. CHARLES CRAIG (Antrim, S.): May I also ask the Postmaster-General whether, in view of the importance of the matter to Ireland, he will ensure that that this House shall have an opportunity of discussing any new proposals as to the carriage of mails to Canada, or to other countries via Canada, or any proposals of the Government of this country with reference to what is known as the all-red route.

MR. HOGAN (Tipperary, N.): I wish also to ask the Postmaster-General whether, before entering into any contract with the Canadian Pacific Railway Company for the carriage of mails, he will give an opportunity to representatives from Ireland to discuss the terms of it.

THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON, Tower Hamlets, Poplar): A mail contract of this description has to be ratified by the House. As regards the particular contract in question it is a continuation for three years of an existing contract at a greatly reduced payment.

If a route more advantageous than that of the Canadian Pacific Railway Company should hereafter become available, its adoption will not be precluded by the proposed contract with that company.

Sales of Weed Killers.

*MR. REES: I beg to ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether the Board has made an order to the effect that disinfectants, weed killers, and the like preparations, are drugs within the meaning of the Sale of Food and Drugs Act; and whether it is proposed that such disinfectants, weed killers, etc., if sold by others than registered pharmacists, shall have a label attached declaring their efficiency in terms of certain recognised standard tests.

THE TREASURER OF THE HOUSEHOLD (Sir EDWARD STRACHEY, Somersetshire, S.): The reply to the first part of the Question is in the negative. The conditions under which the articles to which my hon. friend refers should be sold are under consideration by the Joint Committee appointed in connection with the Poisons and Pharmacy Bill.

*MR. REES: Are there not certain tests recognised by the certain Government Departments?

SIR EDWARD STRACHEY: The matter is under consideration.

Royal Commission on Horse Breeding.

MR. LONSDALE (Armagh, Mid.): I beg to ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, when the Report of the Royal Commission on Horse-Breeding will be published.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. CHARLES HOBHOUSE, Bristol, E.): I hope early this week.

MR. CHAPLIN (Surrey, Wimbledon): What is the cause of this great delay? Is the hon. Gentleman aware that the Report was presented to the Treasury at least three weeks ago? Will he do everything he can to expedite its production?

*MR. SPEAKER: The Question has been fully answered.

Criminal Appeal Act—Shorthand Writers Fees.

MR. J. M. ROBERTSON (Northumberland, Tyneside): I beg to ask the Prime Minister whether the Treasury propose to increase the fees for shorthand writing under the Criminal Appeal Act, owing to the dissatisfaction occasioned by the present fees.

MR. CHARLES HOBHOUSE: Perhaps I may be allowed to answer this Question. I see no sufficient reason for increasing the fees payable for shorthand writing under the Criminal Appeal Act; but in addition to the fees prescribed in the scale, an allowance will be made for travelling and subsistence expenses when a shorthand writer has to be brought from a distance.

New Forest Fires.

SIR ROBERT HOBART (Hampshire, New Forest): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether His Majesty's Commissioner of Woods and Forests has received a memorial from the commoners and other inhabitants of Burley, in the New Forest, protesting against the burnings of gorse and heather recently carried out by the Crown authorities in that neighbourhood; whether application had been made to the Crown authorities, and refused by them, for permission to cut such gorse and heather; whether further application, similarly made, expressly to spare from burning certain spots of the forest on account of their natural beauty, has been entirely disregarded; whether he is aware that dissatisfaction has arisen in this neighbourhood and the New Forest generally on the subject; whether any, and what, steps will be taken to control in the future similar action giving rise to so much local annoyance; and whether he will cause a special and independent local inquiry to be held respecting the matter now complained of.

MR. CHARLES HOBHOUSE: I am informed that the memorial referred to (from the commoners and other inhabitants of Burley, in the New Forest) has been received by the Commissioner of Woods in charge of the New Forest.

The burning complained of is of strips of waste by the roadside, and was carried out by the Commissioner's instructions as a precautionary measure with a view to reducing the risk of conflagrations over large areas started by persons passing along the roads. I understand that such fires occur frequently every year during the dry season of the early spring and, through not being under control, are often the cause of great damage and disfigurement to the forest. No application had been received by the Crown authorities for permission to cut the gorse and heather on the strips in question. One person asked that certain gorse might not be burned, and his request was met as far as possible. Several applications have been received, including some from residents of Burley, asking that further areas might be burned. A certain amount of dissatisfaction with what has been done appears to have arisen in the neighbourhood of Burley, and some temporary disfigurement of the forest, as seen from the high roads, was unavoidable, but it is believed that in a few weeks little trace of the burning will be visible, as the ground that was blackened is already becoming green. The Commissioner will personally inspect the areas in question, and the matter will continue to have his careful consideration.

Public Expenditure.

MR. HAROLD COX (Preston): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he is aware that the expenditure upon public works and buildings has increased from £1,889,000 in 1898–9 to £3,029,000 in 1908–9; and whether, in view of this growth in so short a period, he will follow the precedent set in the appointment of the Publications Committee, which has already effected large savings in the Stationery Vote, and ask the House to appoint a Select Committee to examine the expenditure upon public works and to report from time to time whether any economies can judiciously be effected.

MR. CHARLES HOBHOUSE: My right hon. friend is fully aware of the usefulnesss of the work done by the Select Committee on Official Publications; but the services provided for in the Vote for Stationery and Printing and in the Vote for Public Works and Buildings are very dissimilar, and he is inclined to doubt whether the advantage to be obtained would justify the labour involved by adopting the suggestion of his hon. friend.

MR. HAROLD COX: I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether his attention has been called to the recommendations made by the Select Committee on National Expenditure that the Treasury should at fixed intervals, perhaps once in five years, exercise the right which they already possess to overhaul and systematically revise the staff of the various departments, and that an Estimates Committee should be appointed continuously in the same way and possess the same powers as the Public Accounts Committee; and what steps have been taken, or will be taken, to give effect to these recommendations.

MR. CHARLES HOBHOUSE: My right hon. friend will give further consideration to the suggestion made in the first part of the Question; but, as at present advised, he feels great doubt whether the inquiries recommended would produce any result commensurate with the time and labour which would be involved. As regards the latter part of the Question, he cannot at present add anything to the reply given by the late Prime Minister to the hon. Member for the Keighley Division on the 18th June last.

South African War Debt.

MR. HAROLD COX: I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer what is the amount of the debt incurred in connection with the South African war still remaining unpaid; what annuity would be required to pay off that remaining debt, with interest, in fifteen years; what is the sum now annually devoted to the interest and reduction of debt, excluding annuities charged upon the estimates for works loans, over and above the sum so devoted before the war; and what is the annual yield of the war taxes still in existence.

MR. CHARLES HOBHOUSE: The Prime Minister will deal with the subjects to which my hon. friend alludes in his Budget statement, and I do not propose to anticipate anything which he may have to say.

Canadian Mail Contract.

MR. J. MACVEAGH (Down, S.): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, before entering into any new contract with the Canadian Pacific Railway for the conveyance of mails, he will take care to ascertain the views of the Irish representatives as to the feasibility of the proposed alternative route.

MR. CHARLES HOBHOUSE: The new contract cannot be concluded until it has been confirmed by a Resolution of the House of Commons.

Morrich More Lands.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland, in view of the fact that a public notice has recently been issued by the royal burgh of Tain to the effect that the lands of Morrich More are to be let for grazing purposes and for the shootings, or to be used as a rabbit warren, will he ascertain by what authority it is proposed to enclose Morrich More with a fence, which will have the effect of depriving the neighbouring crofters and others of grazing rights which they have enjoyed from time immemorial.

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Mr. SINCLAIR, Forfarshire): The facts appear to be generally as stated in my hon. friend's Question, but the matter is not one in which the Secretary for Scotland has any jurisdiction. If the actions of the burgh of Tain are an invasion of the legal rights of any other parties claiming interests in the lands involved, these rights can only be established in the ordinary civil Courts.

Squatters in the Island of Lewis.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether he is aware that, at the recent quarterly meeting of the Lewis district committee, the chairman stated that there were at present cottars and squatters in the Island of Lewis, representing with their families a population of 7,200, who held no house or land, and paid no local or other rates, this number being nearly one-third of the whole population in the landward part of Lewis; and will he state what action he proposes to take to improve the condition of these landless people, the majority of whom are the sons or grandsons of evicted crofters.

MR. SINCLAIR: I accept the statement of facts from my hon. friend, and the subject is under consideration, though I am not able to make any further statement at present.

Smoking Chimneys in the Island of Lewis.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether he is aware that owing to the chimneys of the houses built by the Congested Districts Board at Aiguish, Island of Lewis, being defective, the tenants suffer greatly from smoke; and will steps be taken to put the chimneys in satisfactory order.

MR. SINCLAIR: Steps have been taken by the Congested Districts Board to cope with this evil and if the result has not been satisfactory the matter shall be further investigated.

Kingstown Pier Dispute.

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General when the correspondence between the Post Office and the City of Dublin Steam Packet Company and the London and North Western Railway Company, referring to the permission given to the latter company to sail from the Carlisle Pier at Kingstown, will be printed.

MR. CHARLES HOBHOUSE: Early this week.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: Is the hon. Gentleman aware that these papers were promised a month since? Will he see that we get them without further delay?

MR. CHARLES HOBHOUSE: There will be no further delay, as my Answer says.

National Expenditure.

MR. HAROLD COX: I beg to ask the Prime Minister whether he is aware that the estimated expenditure on the Civil Service and Revenue Departments is nearly £5,000,000 in excess of the actual expenditure in the year 1905–6; and whether he can afford the House any opportunity of a general discussion of the causes of this increase and of its effect upon the taxpayers of the country.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. ASQUITH, Fife, E.): An opportunity for such a discussion as that to which my hon. friend alludes arises every year on the Motion to go into Committee on the Civil Service Estimates.

MR. HAROLD COX: Is the policy of reduced expenditure to which the Liberal Party pledged itself at the last general election still part of the programme of the Liberal Party?

MR. ASQUITH: Certainly.

Ministerial Salaries.

MR. HAROLD COX: I beg to ask the Prime Minister whether it is proposed to increase the salaries of the President of the Board of Trade and of the President of the Local Government Board; and, if so, whether this increase will be provided by a reduction of other Ministerial salaries or by increasing the burdens upon the taxpayer; and, in the latter alternative, when he proposes to ask the House to make the necessary grant.

MR. ASQUITH: The whole question of the functions and *status* of these two offices is the subject of inquiry by a Committee of the Cabinet; and I am not at present able to say what proposals we shall be in a position to make to Parliament.

Mr. Churchill's Home Rule Declarations.

MR. JAMES CAMPBELL (Dublin University): I beg to ask the Prime Minister whether he has made any declaration, or authorised the President of the Board of Trade to make any declaration, to the Standing Committee of the United Irish League of Great Britain, to the effect that Home Rule, in the sense of the recent Resolution moved by the hon. and learned Member for the city of Waterford, would be put by the Government before the electors at the general election.

MR. ASQUITH: The only declarations of the President of the Board of Trade on this subject of which I have any cognisance are his public utterances. What my right hon. friend stated in substance, and with my approval, was this, that though it was impossible for him, or anyone else, to determine now what issue or issues would be before the electors at the next general election, the disabling pledge which he and others gave applied only to the action of the existing Parliament and that at its expiration the Liberal Party would claim and possess a perfectly free hand to deal with the whole problem of Irish Government.

MR. JAMES CAMPBELL: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that during the recent election in North-West Manchester a statement under the signatures of two hon. Members of this house (the Members for Waterford and for the Scotland Division of Liverpool) was published in the Press to the specific effect of the statement contained in my Question?

MR. ASQUITH: I have seen a statement to that effect. I am not responsible in any way for any construction put upon my right hon. friend's words by others. My right hon. friend assures me that after the statement to which the right hon. Gentleman has referred was published he repeated these words; and they are the only statement for which either he or the Government is responsible; and I can only repeat what I have already said, that the statement I authorised, and which my right hon. friend made, was in the terms and sense which I have described in the House.

MR. LEVERTON HARRIS (Tower Hamlets, Stepney): Was it a condition of the pledges given at North-West Manchester by the President of the Board of Trade that he should have the official support of the Irish Party in that fight?

*MR. SPEAKER: How can the Prime Minister know that?

MR. BYLES (Salford, N.): Is there any manner of doubt that Home Rule for Ireland is still a cardinal point in the programme of the Liberal Party?

MR. ASQUITH: The opinion of the Liberal Party and of the Government on this subject was, I think, sufficiently and plainly expressed in the amended Resolution to which we agreed.

MR. PIKE PEASE (Darlington): Can the right hon. Gentleman say anything in regard to Scotland?

[No Answer was returned].

Irish Universities Bill.

MR. WILLIAM O'BRIEN (Cork): I beg to ask the Prime Minister, seeing the general favour with which the Irish Universities Bill has been received, whether an early day will be named for the Second Reading; and, if so, whether he can now fix the date.

MR. ASQUITH: The Second Reading will be taken as soon as the state of business allows, and I hope before long; but I cannot at present fix the date.

Licensing Bill.

SIR HENRY KIMBER (Wandsworth): I beg to ask the Prime Minister what is intended by the Government to happen under the Licensing Bill, either during the fourteen years time-limit or at the end of that period, as regards hotels of which the following are examples, namely, a hotel built on ground held on lease at a ground rent of £1,600 a year and on which £150,000 has been spent in building and equipment, such hotel having or not having a tap, and a hotel built on a freehold site, acquired and built expressly as a hotel, at a cost of, say, including equipment, £50,000, and which only supplies liquors to its internal guests, and having no tap.

MR. ASQUITH: It is quite impossible to answer an abstract question such as this, or even to say what will happen in a concrete case during or after the next fourteen years. But it may be pointed out that hotels, to which the holding of a licence is merely auxiliary, such as, perhaps, the hon. Member has in mind, are to be given special consideration both in regard to the reduction scheme (*see* First Schedule, Modification No. 2) and in regard to prohibition (*see* Clause 2 (6)).

MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS (Kent, St. Augustine's): Does the Prime Minister intend at the close of the Second Reading debate to move to refer the Licensing Bill to a Committee of the Whole House?

MR. ASQUITH: Yes, Sir.

LORD R. CECIL (Marylebone, E.): Is it intended that the provisions of subsection 2 of Clause 3 shall apply to all licences existing at the end of the reduction period?

MR. ASQUITH said that subsection 2 of Clause 3 would, in the absence of fresh legislation, apply to all licences existing at the end of the reduction period; but it was quite clear from the wording of the subsection that further legislation on this subject was contemplated as necessary.

PERSONAL EXPLANATIONS.

*MR. GEORGE FABER (York): By the kind permission and generous indulgence of the House it has become my unpleasant duty to have to make a personal explanation. In the course of last Thursday afternoon I made a speech on the Second Reading of the Licensing Bill. In a part of that speech I made some remarks upon Dutton's Blackburn Brewery, and in pursuing its unfortunately somewhat decadent fortunes I had occasion to refer at the conclusion of my remarks in these terms to the right hon. Gentleman the Patronage Secretary. I asked—and *The Times* reports me correctly—

> "Who was the fortunate vendor? His name was Mr. George Whiteley, M.P."

I went on to say that I did not blame the Patronage Secretary, but that, considering the high canons of morality which had been set up by the Prime Minister and by other prominent speakers on the Radical side of the House with regard to brewery companies, the right hon. Member might find it a somewhat difficult task when Monday evening came to drive the immaculate Radical sheep into the Radical fold. The right hon. Gentleman was not present when I made these observations. I regret that I did not give him notice. If he had been present I believe that neither in manner nor in matter would he have taken umbrage at anything I said. The right hon. Gentleman saw me personally, later, and wrote to me—I need not disclose the details either of the conversation or of the letters which passed between us; but in effect the right hon. Gentleman asked me to withdraw, and in effect I replied that I should wait to hear his statement, and then, if that statement convinced me that I had been wrong, of course I should at once get up in my place and express my regret. I understand, however, that according to the practise of the House that course is not open to me. If the right hon. Gentleman did make his statement, it would not be open to me to make a reply; and, therefore, this alternative presents itself to me, that either the right hon. Gentleman should make his speech, and I should be forced to remain silent, or that I should make the first statement. I say now deliberately in the face of the House that what I said in the House is in fact substantially the case, and that I cannot in any way withdraw from the position I took up, and if the House will grant me its kind indulgence I will explain why.

*MR. SPEAKER: I understood the right hon. Gentleman was rising to make an explanation. It appears that he has only risen to repeat what he said. If he is prepared to withdraw anything from the statement which he made on the previous occasion, I am sure the House would listen; but if he is not prepared to do so, he has no *status* whatever.

*MR. GEORGE FABER: The moment you rise and tell me that, Sir, I have done. [AN HON. MEMBER: What did you begin for?] I showed no ill-feeling towards the right hon. Gentleman. I say again in face of the House that I adhere to what I said.

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member has really taken a course he had no business to have taken. I may say he entirely misled me. I understood that he was prepared to make some explanation as to how he fell into error, if there was an error. If he is not prepared to admit that there was any error, I am afraid the House will not give him any further opportunity.

THE PATRONAGE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. GEORGE WHITELEY, Yorkshire, W.R., Pudsey): With the permission of the House, I desire to make a personal explanation; and I regret that my hon. friend has not seen fit to withdraw from the position he took up, because I have given to him as fully as I possibly could all the details of the matter; and the hon. Member knows exactly what I am going to tell the House. He came down here on Thursday in my absence, and without the courtesy of giving me notice that he was going to attack me he made a distinct and categorical statement to the House. He described the position of a brewery in Blackburn that had been floated first for £500,000 and re-floated for £750,000, and said that the profits of the re-flotation went into the pockets of the vendor. He said—

> "No doubt hon. Members opposite were burning to know who was the fortunate vendor. His name was Mr. George Whiteley, M.P. He did not blame the Patronage Secretary; but how was he going to answer to the high canon of morality that had been set up on the other side of the House? What answer could he make to the Prime Minister, who was so strong against inflated breweries?"

And then he continued with a rhetorical display which had nothing about it to commend it except the fact that it was destitute of one element of truth. I was not the vendor of that brewery; I never owned or possessed that brewery; and I had no hand whatever in the re-flotation of that brewery to the public. And, singular to say, the hon. Member had in his hand when he made that statement—because he showed it to me within an hour and a half afterwards—a prospectus in which it is distinctly said that another gentleman of the name of Mr. John Fraser, acting on behalf of a London syndicate, was the vendor of that brewery. The hon. Member shakes his head. I have not seen that prospectus for eleven years, except in the hands of the hon. Member. I am prepared to pay £1,000 to any charity the hon. Member is willing to name provided I am wrong. On the other hand, if he is wrong, I ask him to do the same. I leave the whole question in the hands of the right hon. Member for Dublin University, who has got the prospectus in his hand.

SIR E. CARSON (Dublin University): When can I have the stakes?

MR. GEORGE WHITELEY: A leading Tory paper in Yorkshire with which the hon. Member for York was indirectly connected made a similar statement a few years ago, and was communicated with by my solicitors, and withdrew and apologised. I do not know whether the House will bear with me for two minutes while I give the history of the re-flotation of the brewery, which will be found to be absolutely justifiable. The brewery was part of the estate of a gentleman who died in Blackburn towards the end of 1896. Four trustees were appointed, of whom I was one. For convenience sake and for the benefit of the estate the trustees immediately converted that brewery into a sort of private limited liability company and issued debentures to the public, keeping the whole of the share capital in their hands. And because they kept the whole of the shares, they issued only a very small nominal amount of share capital. Just at that time—the beginning of 1897—there was a boom in breweries. Breweries were being bought up and floated by syndicates all over the country; and the trustees, who were perfectly contented with the position of the brewery as a privately managed concern, were pestered and worried to such a degree by over a hundred applications coming day by day that in the end they were obliged, in the interests of the trust, to consider an offer made to them by a London syndicate to purchase the brewery. The trustees were pressed time after time to permit them to float the brewery on their behalf. I was then a Member of the House. I knew the difficulties and dangers of flotation and re-flotation; and I said that under no circumstances would I have had anything to do with the flotation of a public company. The trustees, in the interests of the estate, met the syndicate. They were persuaded to put a price on the brewery. The whole transaction was completed in five minutes, and the brewery was bought and sold to the syndicate; and, as evidence of the good faith and substantial position of the purchasing syndicate, they were required to pay over £25,000 to the trustees before the trustees put their hands to paper in the matter. The syndicate then floated the brewery at a considerably enhanced price; and naturally the profits went into their pockets minus the cost of flotation. In justice to them I must say that the circumstances of the brewing trade then were of such a character, and the position of the brewery was such—the increasing profits shown year by year were so substantial—that the issue to the public was made at nothing but a reasonable figure by the capitalists I have mentioned; and at the present moment, even after the great "slump" in brewing profits—after that great reduction—that concern in Blackburn is now making a profit which would pay a full rate of interest on the sum of money the trustees received from the purchasing syndicate.

*MR. GEORGE FABER: What is it paying on the ordinary shares?

MR. GEORGE WHITELEY: There, again, the hon. Member is discovering a new mare's nest, which he is wonderfully clever in unearthing. The ordinary shares have been obliterated. The hon. Member did not tell the House the circumstances of that wiping out of the ordinary shares. He did not tell the House that two people who were interested in that brewery and had preference shares voluntarily surrendered a certain number of preference shares, which were given in exchange for the ordinary shares, and so the preference shareholders wiped them out.

*MR. GEORGE FABER: For how much?

MR. GEORGE WHITELEY: It does not matter how much. It was sufficient, in the minds of the ordinary shareholders to make them accept the exchange. The trustees did their duty to the state; and if the whole transaction were to be done over again they would act in exactly the same way.

COSTS IN CRIMINAL CASES BILL.

Reported, with Amendments, from Standing Committee C.

Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 134.]

Minutes of the Proceedings of the Standing Committee to be printed. [No. 134.]

Bill, as amended (by the Standing Committee), to be taken into consideration upon Thursday next, and to be printed. [Bill 208.]

MUNICIPAL REPRESENTATION BILL [LORDS].

Read the first time; to be read a second time upon Wednesday, and to be printed. [Bill 209.]

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES) (CHAIRMEN'S PANEL).

Mr. STUART-WORTLEY reported from the Chairmen's Panel; That they had discharged Mr. Stuart-Wortley from being Chairman of Standing Committee A, and had appointed Sir Francis

Channing to act as Chairman of Standing Committee A in his place.

Mr. STUART-WORTLEY further reported; That they had discharged Mr. Eugene Wason from being Chairman of the Standing Committee on Scottish Bills, and had appointed Sir William Holland to act as Chairman of the Standing Committee on Scottish Bills in his place.

Reports to lie upon the Table.

NEW BILL.

WORKMEN'S EVICTION (TRADE DISPUTES) BILL.

"To prevent the Eviction of Workmen in certain cases of trade disputes," presented by Mr. Walsh; supported by Mr. Enoch Edwards, Mr. Glover, Mr. Wadsworth, Dr. Pollard, Mr. John Ward, Mr. Thorne, Mr. Arthur Henderson, Mr. James Haslam, Mr. Clynes, Mr. William Abraham (Rhondda), and Mr. Albert Stanley; to be read a second time upon Wednesday, 20th May, and to be printed. [Bill 210.]

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE.

Ordered, "That Mr. Runciman be discharged from the Public Accounts Committee."

Ordered, "That Mr. Hobhouse be added to the Committee."—(*Mr. Whiteley.*)

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (LICENSING BILL).

Ordered, "That the Proceedings on the Licensing Bill, if under discussion at Eleven o'clock this night, be not interrupted under the Standing Order (Sittings of the House)."—(*Mr. Asquith.*)

LICENSING BILL.

Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Amendment to Question [28th April], "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Which Amendment was—

> "To leave out from the word 'That' to the end of the Question, in order to add the words 'This House declines to proceed further with a measure which, while failing to promote the cause of temperance, violates the principles of equity.'—(*Mr. Cave*)—instead thereof."

Question again proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

MR. CHAPLIN (Surrey, Wimbledon), resuming his speech, said: There are three points with regard to the general complexion of the Bill to which I still desire to devote some observations. The first of them is this: According to my mind it is really a misnomer to call this a temperance Bill at all. It is in reality a Finance Bill. Personally I feel obliged to describe it, as regards some of its clauses at all events—which I hope, however, will be largely modified in the future—as a great measure of what seems to me a financial blunder, which should never be introduced in our time or by any Government. I believe the Bill is fraught with injury and wrong to the great interest with which it proposes to deal, and in my judgment the injury inflicted is by no means limited to that. I do not wish to exaggerate, and I do not think I shall do so if I say that one, and by no means the least, of the injuries inflicted by this Bill is that it has given something in the nature of a shock to public confidence. You have frightened and alarmed every other interest in the country, and, in my opinion, that is perhaps one of the most mischievous and most dangerous contingencies that appertain to the Government of this country. Nobody now, no matter who or what he is, whatever his work, calling, business, profession, or property, knows whether he may not be disturbed tomorrow. It is now the turn of the brewers; to-morrow it may be that of the bankers or anybody else, and it is because that is the situation to-day that I have described this Bill as having given a shock to public confidence. The worst of it is this, that although the Bill may be destroyed, and I trust most earnestly will be, yet unhappily the shock to public confidence will remain. It seems to me that the Government are inconsistent in their policy. It is said that this is a great measure to diminish drunkenness and promote the cause of temperance amongst our people. There cannot be a more admirable object. But are not the inhabitants of

Ireland and Scotland part of our people? Surely they are, and if this is the object of this Bill and it is good for England, can it be less good for the people of the other two countries also? If that be so, why is it not extended to Ireland and Scotland, where at the present time it is notorious that the consumption of alcoholic liquor is greater than it is in England? If the Government did extend it it might bring them into sharp collision with their greatest allies and principal supporters in those countries. But if that is what accounts for their exclusion from this Bill, I must remark that it says very little for the genuine character and the reality of the Government's reforming zeal in the campaign into which they have entered against the evil of drunkenness. At this period of the debate it is needless for me to dwell at any length on the measure of the loss they are going to inflict upon large numbers of the people of this country. That has been done, I think, pretty thoroughly already. But what is the use of doing so in the face of the callous indifference, as it appears to me, of the Front Treasury Bench with regard to the effect of the Bill on large numbers of people in this country? That weighs with me more than anything else in my opposition to this Bill, an opposition I am determined to continue to offer to it. One hon. Member of the Front Bench spoke in terms of the greatest pity of the poor and widow investors, who, he said, would suffer greatly. I would fain believe the pity he expressed was genuine, but if it was, what pity do the Government show them in this Bill? Where is it to be found in any single one of the forty-seven clauses? Why, that document as it stands at present is not one but a whole series of clauses designed, and very cleverly designed, to complete the ruin of these people. I say that it is the Government and the Party who support them who have made already and are continuing to make the position, which they declare to be bad enough, infinitely worse. [Cries of "No."] Yes, a thousand times or more, as is shown by the opposition to their measure even at the present moment and before it is carried—and I hope it never may be—into law. Let me ask another question. What is this going to justify? What are the Government going to gain by these harsh and cruel methods that they are adopting? Surely they must know by this time; they surely must have realised by now that there are hundreds of humble investors in this country whom this Bill in its present shape will bring to poverty, and I am afraid in many cases to absolute ruin. What are the Government going to do? What is their great object? They have shown us nothing at the present time to give warrant to the Bill, or to show that the reduction of the licences and the diminution of drunkenness will proceed *pari passu* together; that the substitution of clubs which they cannot control for the public-houses which they can, and do, is likely to lead in the smallest degree to the spread of temperance among our people so simply, widely, and happily as everyone on all sides of the House desires. All the facts and figures so freely quoted in this debate appear to me, and I have done my best to master them, to lead to absolutely opposite conclusions. I believe myself, with the most absolute sincerity, that this measure, whatever the expectations and anticipations of the Government may be with regard to it, is more likely to lead to increased consumption of alcoholic liquors privately or otherwise. It will be enough to quote the statement of Mr. Gladstone, that there are three great principles which ought to guide us in the consideration of this question, and one of them is that changes should be made with due and careful regard to the state of public opinion in the country. That reminds me of something I was told a great many years ago—I do not like to think how many—by Mr. Delane, the famous editor of *The Times*, to whom, in those days, I was often indebted for much kindness and encouragement. What he said to me was this—

> "Now, remember that on any question of unusual interest and public excitement the letter-bag of *The Times* is almost always an unfailing indication of public opinion."

I do not know how far the private post may convey the same kind of information, but this I do know, that never in the whole course of my political career have I had such an enormous number of communications on any subject as I have had on this, except one other, but that was a very different kind of matter altogether. But if these private letters convey anything, all I can say is this, that the tide of public opinion must be running at a most alarming rate against hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite, and unless they take great care, it seems to me, if I may judge by my experience, that it will end very quickly indeed in an irresistible and overwhelming flood, which in all probability will sweep them and their Bills away together. That in all probability is the fate which, sooner or later, awaits them. I would venture to appeal to His Majesty's Government, on behalf of these unhappy and unfortunate investors of whom I have spoken, who are in no way whatever to blame for the position of the licensing question as a whole, to reconsider, if they will, the position of these persons, these thousands, these millions of investors, to one and all of whom the provisions of this Bill in its present form will be a most injurious, unjust, and to many, I fear, a crushing and fatal blow. Most earnestly do I hope that my appeal will meet with some consideration at all events, for this I do feel, that if you adhere to what you call the fundamental provisions of your Bill, if you persist in forcing them through Parliament in their present form, not only will you find the verdict of public opinion entirely against you, but you will go down to posterity with the execration of your victims as men who were responsible, for the first time in the history of English Government, for the most uncalled for, for the most heartless and cruel piece of public confiscation that was ever attempted by any English Ministry against thousands, nay, against millions, of perfectly innocent, perfectly blameless, and perfectly unoffending people of this kingdom.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE, Carnarvon Boroughs): In the last solemn words which the right hon. Gentleman addressed to this House, he threatened us with a flood which was to sweep us away. I do not know when we are to be submerged in this alcoholic deluge, but in the meantime we must do our best to avert the evils which the right hon. Gentleman himself is prepared to acknowledge that this traffic is causing to the country. I have listened with a good deal of attention to the bifurcated speech which he has delivered partly on Friday and partly this morning, but in the course of that speech he has given the House pretty well all the stock arguments ever advanced against any measure of reform in this House of Commons. We have had "the thin end of the wedge"; it is simply the beginning; it is to lead to Socialism. It is rather remarkable, if this is a Socialistic measure—and I would like the right hon. Gentleman to explain the phenomenon—if it is a Socialistic measure, based on Socialistic principles, how he accounts for the fact that the Socialistic Party is engaged at the present moment in fighting all the candidates who are supporting the Bill.

MR. CHAPLIN: Well, I informed the House that the Socialists were supporting it with enthusiasm in the House of Commons.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: I know, but not because it is based on Socialistic principles. They are supporting it on its merits, exactly as the Archbishop of Canterbury is supporting it. He surely does not belong to the Independent Labour Party. Then the right hon. Gentleman used the argument of confiscation—this argument which has been advanced against every Liberal measure from the days of the Reform Bill. The owners of rotten boroughs used the same argument. There were men in those boroughs who made a trade out of the franchise which they had there. They had a reasonable expectation from their past experience that they would still go on making the same business. They were swept away without compensation; so they said it was robbery. We have also had the widows and orphans dressed up for the occasion. Ever since I have been in this House whenever there has been any Bill or any act of administration of a Liberal character, we have always had the widows and orphans introduced. It was the case in regard to the taxation of ground values; they seem to have invested in those. In respect of bad housing accommodation, widows and orphans have invested largely in that class of property. Then as to Chinese labour. The widows and orphans seem to have picked out all the worst mines in South Africa, all the mines that could not pay without coolie labour, and invested heavily in them. I thought they had lost all their money there, but it seems that the money they have lost they have re-invested in Meux's brewery. Then the right hon. Gentleman trotted out "The Coach and Horses." That is a most useful electioneering wheeze, but if the right hon. Gentleman had taken the trouble to investigate the circumstances he would have found that there is really nothing in it.

MR. CHAPLIN: I gave the facts of the case, and asked you to answer them.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: I think the right hon. Gentleman might have at least taken the House into his confidence. The House would then have known that the facts stated have nothing in common at all with the facts as they really are. I will deal with that later. I want to come to the question of expectation. The right hon. Gentleman finally has come to the conclusion that this is a Bill which will lead to an increase in the consumption of drink, and yet it will ruin the brewers. All those who are engaged in making beer and selling beer are to be reduced to beggary, and yet this Bill is somehow or other going to increase the consumption of drink throughout the country. It is a very remarkable Bill if that is the case. But, having listened to this debate for three or four days, there is one thing that has struck me very forcibly, more especially in listening to the speeches on the other side of the House. No man listening to those speeches could come to the conclusion that we were debating a proposal made by a Government which is supported by all the organisations that have made a special study of this problem—debating a Government Bill to deal with the greatest social evil of the moment, an acknowledged evil, not disputed by any section, and acknowledged by the right hon. Gentleman in those eloquent words which he used towards the close of his speech.

SIR FRANCIS LOWE (Birmingham, Edgbaston): It is a decreasing evil.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: I should be very glad to believe that that is the case, but I am sorry to say, looking at the statistics, it is not decreasing; on the contrary, in some respects it is increasing, and far and away the most serious increase is that of female drinking. From the point of view of the future of the race, I cannot conceive of any graver symptom than that. At any rate I do not know that it is denied by anybody that it is a very grave social evil, and the gravest of the moment. Yet nobody listening to the speeches on the other side of the House could conceive that we are really discussing the method of curing that evil. On the contrary, it is all about debentures, and preference shares, and investments, and Stock Exchange transactions, while at the bottom of the whole thing you have this very grave social symptom. If hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite had come to the House and said: "We are dissatisfied with your proposals dealing with the property invested in the liquor traffic," and if they had said: "Provided there is some equitable provision made, we will help you to the utmost of our power to solve the problem, to do something to decrease the evil of intemperance, by equipping magistrates and local authorities with full powers to cope with the evil," then, speaking for myself, I say I should not scrutinise so closely the title of the publicans and the licencees to even generous treatment. But they have not done so. They have treated it purely as if it were a property question. And, therefore, we are bound, in the first instance, to examine the claim which is put forward by them to the treatment of this as property and to examine closely the character which they claim the property has and the treatment which ought to be meted out to it as a property when the State takes measures for the purpose of dispossessing, for public reasons, those who are in the enjoyment of that property. Well now, what is that property? We have heard a good deal about vested rights. The licence has been treated as if it were an indefeasible vested right or interest in the licensees. Who has ever said so? I ask the right hon. Gentleman who will probably take part in the debate after I have sat down whether he can point out a single Act of Parliament or a single decision of any Court which recognises this property as having the character of a vested legal right. I am dealing with the problem before the Act of 1904. The Leader of the Opposition when he introduced that Bill made it perfectly clear that, in his judgment, it did not alter the law as it stood at that time—he did not intend that it should. He did not intend to confer on the licensees any right which they did not possess at that moment. But, still more, practically all the money invested in these brewery companies was in the main invested on the strength of the law as it existed before 1904. There has been very little money invested since. Therefore, the whole question is: What expectation had those investors when they put their money in, and is there anything in this Bill which defeats that expectation? I do not want to enter into any very elaborate legal argument, but I should have thought it was perfectly clear to anyone who had taken the trouble to master even the elements of the law that before 1904 the licensees had only an expectation defeasible either on misconduct or in the absolute discretion of the magistrates whenever they considered the house was not required owing to redundancy. All the decisions on that point are perfectly clear. I do not know that I can do better than quote an extract from the argument in the Court of Appeal in the case of "Sharp *v.* Wakefield," because I think that puts it as clearly as it could possibly be put. The Master of the Rolls there said—

> "Not renewing is not taking away, it is not giving."

We have heard a good deal about the bargain and the contract in the course of this debate. Mr. Candy, who was then the leading counsel of the licensed victuallers, said—

> "He has expended his money on the strength of an unwritten contract, between himself and the State as represented by the local authority, that so long as he conducts himself properly and commits no offence against the tenour of his licence, so long will he be allowed to keep a licensed house."

Mr. Lloyd-George.

The Master of the Rolls answers—

> "Where do you find that unwritten contract? You are assuming the point which you have to argue."

Lord Justice Fry said—

> "If you have got a contract you can enforce it."

The Master of the Rolls then went on to say—

> "It is a blank assumption in the way of argument of the thing which you have got to prove. You say that there is an unwritten contract that the magistrates will renew. That is the very thing that you have to prove."

Mr. Candy said—

> "Then perhaps I ought to omit the words, 'Relying on an unwritten contract.'"

The Master of the Rolls said—

> "He has nothing to rely on; he has got a licence for one year and nothing more."

Lord Justice Fry said—

> "He cannot create an obligation on the justices from any expectation of his own. He cannot deprive them of any discretion vested in them because he chooses to expect something."

Well, that is the position to-day. It was purely a licence for a year and no longer. The magistrates not merely had absolute discretion to withhold the renewal of the licence, but they exercised that discretion constantly, not merely on the grounds of misconduct, but because in their judgment the house was not necessary, and superfluous houses rather conduced to intemperance in a neighbourhood. The right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down has quoted Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Gladstone's opinions in 1880. I am sure the right hon. Gentleman was present in the House when Mr. Gladstone later on arguing the question in 1890 stated that after the decisions in the Darwen and "Sharp *v.* Wakefield" cases he had changed his opinion, for the simple reason that after these decisions, he said, it was made perfectly clear to everybody that the licencee had no right to renewal, and that therefore there was nothing to complain about. This is what Mr. Gladstone said on that occasion—

> "The right hon. Gentleman, the President of the Local Government Board, did me the

honour to quote from speeches made by me about ten years ago"—

(the very speeches which the right hon. Gentleman quoted here)

—"passages favouring within limit of terms, and favouring in some degree the principle of compensation in its application to the liquor trade. I should have been obliged to the right hon. Gentleman if he had mentioned two circumstances which, in my opinion, are one of them material and the other vital to the cases now before the House. The one that is material is that the law has been cleared and settled since that date in a manner which, in my judgment and in the judgment of most men, saving the distinguished exception of the Solicitor-General, is highly unfavourable not only to the doctrine of vested interests which the Home Secretary shrinks from maintaining in those terms, but likewise to the doctrine of permanent interest on the part of the publican in his annual licence."

So he made it perfectly clear that he had altered his view in regard to the question of compensation. And he went on, in the course of the same speech, to say that never had he committed himself to compensation to anybody except the licensee who was actually in the enjoyment of the licence himself. That makes a very substantial difference in the position of Mr. Gladstone on this matter. With regard to that position we are told: "Yes, you say it is only an expectation; but you tax it." There was a question put this afternoon by the hon. Member for Tewkesbury in order to show that the Inland Revenue at the present moment taxed it as property. Well, of course, it has a market value. But so have new licences granted under the Act of 1904. There you have no right to renew. It was specifically provided by the then Prime Minister, for he said you must make it clear in future that you are going to create a new licence—there is to be no right of renewal. They are absolutely within the discretion of the Bench. And even if you had local option introduced here to-morrow you would still have an expectation which would have a market value. Take Canada. It is perfectly recognised there that a licence is for one year and no longer. Nobody disputes it. The law takes away the licence without a penny of compensation, though you get local option over the whole of the Dominion practically. By a vote you can put an end to every licence in the district, and still those licences have a market value. There a licensee in a particular district says: "We have had local option in this particular country for about twenty or thirty years, but it has not been exercised." Take Montreal or Toronto. There they say it is not likely to be exercised. They gauge public opinion and they come to the conclusion that as far as Toronto and Montreal are concerned, there is not the remotest probability that there will be any public vote which will take away the expectation of the publican of renewal. What is the result? A licence there has a market value which it has not got in a rural district which is much more liable to fluctuations of public opinion, and where you may get a vote which may deprive the licensee of his licence. That is exactly the case here. The magistrates have the full power to withhold the renewal of a licence, but the licensee says they have not done so; they have only done so in cases of misconduct, or in cases of redundant houses which would create a good deal of mischief; and they just calculate the probabilities of the market and they buy that. Well, that is a real market value which can be taxed in Canada and in the United States of America. It is taxed here, and there is no distinction between one case and the other. Before I dispose of this question, I would like to answer our point. It is said—I think it is said to-day in a leading article in *The Times*—that it is true that the licence may technically have only been granted for one year, but still it is acknowledged as a matter of custom and unbroken habit that there was a right of renewal. That is not the case. Times out of number magistrates have withheld licences on grounds not merely of misconduct, but of redundancy; and any one who will take the trouble to read the book of Mr. Sidney Webb on the licensing system in England, where he seems to have taken an infinity of pains and trouble in order to get at the facts and facts which previously, I think, have not appeared in any history, can see that for himself. What happened? At the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth centuries, when the law was substantially as it was before 1904, licences had been granted probably for the last 200 or 300 years for the same house; but the magistrates, under the influence of public opinion, came to the conclusion that there were too many licensed houses in the country. What did they do? They had no power to grant compensation. They never went to Parliament to ask for powers to grant compensation; on the contrary, they sat down and they examined the problem; they sent to the churchwardens and the clergy and got a report from them of the number of public-houses in each parish, and on the basis of those reports they swept away without any compensation under the powers which were in existence up to 1904 thousands of public-houses in England and Wales. Then came a reaction. But is not that the history of all human progress? Still we are getting on. But the good was done in the meantime, and they rushed to the other extreme as you are doing, and they said: "Now let us have free licences." But free licences were just as much a confiscation of the property of the licensee as reduction. Supposing that, instead of introducing a Bill to reduce licences by 30,000, my right hon. friend had introduced a Bill to abolish licences altogether, and to make the sale of beer and spirits as free as the sale of bread—what would have happened? You would have confiscated ten times more property than by this Bill. That is what the magistrates did. First, they swept away thousands of licences because they were redundant, and then they expanded the number of licences and so reduced their value. Then we come to the do-nothing period, and then during the twenty years before the Act of 1904 benches of magistrates were beginning to reduce licences by the thousand, purely because they were superfluous. What right has any purchaser or investor to assume that the law guaranteed to him an indefeasible title? The law declared emphatically in every Court, from the magistrates to the House of Lords, that there was no indefeasible right, that the discretion of the magistrate was unfettered, and that it had been exercised in thousands of cases, so that the licensed trade knew; and if anything further was required there was the warning given by the Home Secretary. He circularised them and told them that these decisions made it clear that they had no vested interests in their licences. Of these brewery companies which practically came into existence between fifteen and twenty years before the Act of 1904, as much as 95 per cent. of the capital was invested in this period when the law had been declared, and no investor could possibly have been taken in. But we have foreign and Colonial precedents. The law in the Colonies is exactly what it is here. There was an annual licence granted, and yet what have the Colonies done? Local option laws have been passed, and high licence laws have been passed without any compensation. The hon. Member for Dulwich has been very emphatic in his approval of the suggestions that the Government are guilty of a great act of confiscation in imposing a fourteen years time-limit. The hon. Member comes from New Brunswick. What has happened there? In New Brunswick an Act has been passed whereby the Lieutenant-Governor may cancel all licences in a parish on the demand of the parishioners. And the licences are to be entitled to receive what? Fourteen years time-limit? No, a *pro rata* rebate of the licence fee paid by him for the unexpired portion of the year. The hon. Member for Dulwich ought to be ashamed to come from such a colony. In Canada, what is the time-limit? Ninety days. With ninety days notice any parish, without compensation, can adopt a resolution that no liquor shall be sold within its boundaries. In the United States the case is still more significant, and for this reason. The United States is the only country in the world where they have a constitutional law for the protection of property. *The Times Financial Supplement* the other day called attention to that fact, and to the claim put forward in New York that investments were safer in America than in any European country, because a law could not be passed dealing with property without the Supreme Court's declaring it *ultra vires*. Yet in that country they passed in tens of States laws conferring on the locality power to wipe out licences without the payment of a single penny. If that is confiscation, why does not the Supreme Court, which is the most sensitive Court in the world, interfere? They have not done so. I might ask hon. Members opposite, that being the law, what claim they can put forward for the liquor trade's receiving exceptional indulgence. I should like to point out one circumstance. A good deal of its profit must be a profit on excessive drinking and on illegal drinking. Hundreds of thousands of convictions for drunkenness! It all goes to swell the claims for compensation. Take the finance of the trade. My hon. friend the Member for Spen Valley in the very powerful contribution which he made to this debate has quite sufficiently exposed that. But the hon. and learned Member for the Walton Division quoted a few cases the other day; and he was very indignant about the robbing of people who had invested their money in a certain brewery. The hon. and learned Member mixes up his statistics and his law so much with his jokes that I find it very difficult to discriminate. But he produced certain figures on the First Reading, and he was asked to show how they were made up. He has not yet thought fit to comply with that request.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN (Worcestershire, E.): He explained that.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: Yes, but he has had two months to produce them; and certainly brewery figures and finance cannot be accepted without investigation. I wonder whether the hon. and learned Member has investigated his cases very thoroughly? I invite him to do so. What are the facts in regard to several of these brewery companies, and the noisiest of them? There are two cases I know. Most people when invited to invest in debentures assume that they are a first security on the property. What is the fact in relation to these brewery companies? They buy public-house after public-house, mortgaging each in turn. Then they obtain a valuation of the premises, deduct the mortgages, and issue a prospectus, not saying that there are mortgages, but giving the balance, the mere equity of redemption. They give the public the impression that the valuation is one of the property as it stands; and then people invest in the debentures, and the result is that in many cases they lose their money. Then these people talk about widows and orphans.

MR. HARMOOD-BANNER (Liverpool, Everton): May we have the names?

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: I have no objection to giving the names. As far as property is concerned, all you have is this shadowy expectation dependent on the discretion of the magistrates, up to the end of 1904. It is true that under that Act, under the pressure of the trade, something more was given. But that is property that belonged to the people. A right was taken from the public. When it is suggested that Government, in the interest of the public, are taking away private property, that is called robbery. What name should be given to the taking away of the property which belongs to the public? [Cries of "Political jobbery."] What in this Bill do we offer in substitution for this purely shadowy expectation? First of all a time-limit of fourteen years, which is the most liberal allowance ever given, except in one case, in any temperance Bill introduced throughout the Empire. If any licence is taken away in the meantime compensation is given. I have heard a good deal of criticism on the basis of the compensation. That compensation depends entirely upon the extent to which the brewer has been honest to the public in supplying the facts to the Inland Revenue and the assessment committee. If he chooses to pay a nominal rent and produce that to the Revenue officer as the real rent; if he prefers that the rent should be paid under the name of "barrelage;" if he prefers to cook the accounts and never to reveal it until he brings forward his claim for compensation, then he must suffer like other people. This is over-cleverness, I suppose. Take the "Crown" case given by the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Kingston in his very able speech. He put the "Crown" case, and said that under this Bill the compensation would be something trivial. Very well, but why? I will tell him. The "Crown" case is one where the rent of the lease was £20.

Very well, the time came when the "Crown" had to be paid compensation, and suddenly it was discovered that the real rent was not £20 but £150. Why and how? "Oh" it was said. "it is by putting in 15s. a barrel," and that was the real rent which was the basis on which the Judge computed the compensation, but in the meantime what had happened? That was the rent which was given to the Inland Revenue officers, but £150 was not the rent given for the purposes of the Poor Law. I have no doubt that those gentlemen who owned the house were patriots, and yet they were defrauded the Revenue of perhaps two-thirds of what they were entitled to pay as a contribution towards bringing the war to an end. They took away all this money from the poor—the very poor who whom they had helped to create. They defrauded the Revenue, defrauded their fellow ratepayers, defrauded the shareholders, defrauded each other as to the basis of compensation, and then when we propose to protect the victims they turn round and say: "What thieves you are!" If I were the hon. and learned Member for Kingston I do not think I would quote the "Crown" case again. Look at all these cases, and take this Return presented to the House of Commons by my hon. friend the Under-Secretary for the Home Department. Look at the compensation paid, and look at the basis on which these houses contributed either to the Revenue or to the local rates. A little public-house at Wandsworth is compensated by payment of £4,600 for the licence, not for the house. If the licence is taken away, what would the goodwill be worth without the licence? Here was a little bit of a house, which, if you were to let it, would only bring in about £45. It was absolutely unfitted for a purpose of this kind, but if you took the basis of compensation you would find that it was not paying half of its real contribution to the revenue and the local rates. Their first duty is to be honest with their neighbours, and this will help them to be so, and to that extent it will do them good. Very well, then, at the end of the fourteen years the State resumes the monopoly value. Now what is the monopoly value? Let me say what it is not. It is assumed that it means that the State will take over all the public-house business of the country. Nothing of the sort. [An HON. MEMBER: I wish it would.] There is an hon. Member who would like the State to start business in that line. That is what the monopoly value is not. You take away nothing from them in the monopoly value which would legitimately belong to them in common with other businesses. I think the best plan is to take some other refreshment business. Supposing you had a refreshment house to supply food in any part of London. What is it that gives it its value? There is the locality to begin with. Then there is the skill and business aptitude of the manager, and there is in addition to that, for it is part of the value, the fact that it has a reputation for cheapness or quality, or a combination of both, and people go to it through force of habit or they are attracted to it in that kind of way by reputation. All that is legitimate business. It is business that enables refreshment-house keepers who have licences to make fortunes at the present moment. But supposing you said to the refreshment-house keeper, say, an "A.B.C." or a "Lyons": "We will step in and prevent anybody else from opening another refreshment room within so many yards of you," it is quite clear that they would be willing to pay a good deal for that. They have built up their business as the result of their skill, but if you give them, in addition to that, protection against competition that in itself has a market value. That is all that is taken and all that it is proposed to resume at the end of fourteen years. It has nothing to do with the business. If they sell good beer, if they keep a good house, if they attract business legitimately, all that is their's still, and it is not well that they should have more. Anything that belongs to the State and which confers a special protection given to them against competition — against a man setting up next door—that they have got to pay for and ought to pay for. As a matter of fact, in principle, there will be no greater power conferred at the end of fourteen years than was possessed by the magistrates before, and what was the power of the magistrates before? The power of the magistrates was to sit down and consider what the needs of the locality were. It was not merely their power but their duty and business. They sat down, as we find recorded in the volume by Mr. Sidney Webb, they asked reports, made inquiries, investigated the matter, and got to know what the needs of the locality were, and what would be good for the locality. Well, having discovered what the locality wanted, they were bound to decide on that and on no other consideration. That is exactly what will happen afterwards, with this difference, that the locality will declare for itself what it wants instead of having to send for the magistrates to make inquiries, put men in the witness-box, and get evidence. The magistrates will say: "We will await the decision of the locality itself." The old system was local option through the witness-box; in future the system will be local option through the ballot box.

*MR. LYTTELTON: Does the right hon. Gentleman say that justices, when an application to renew a licence is made, are entitled to compel the licensee to put the licence up to auction and pay the produce to the public authority?

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: As a matter of fact, I do not know what that has to do with the point with which I am dealing.

*MR. LYTTELTON: The right hon. Gentleman says that at the end of fourteen years time-limit the licensee is precisely in the same position, that he is restored to the same position as before 1904. I think that is not so.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: The point I was making was in regard to the power of suppression, of the power they had to regulate the number of licences. They have exactly the same power as before. The question asked by the right hon. and learned Gentleman is whether it is desirable that there should be power of that kind. That is a matter for argument, which I consider quite subordinate to the general plan. I am dealing with the broad principle, and I think the right hon. and learned Gentleman will see that the power vested in the magistrates before is exactly the power vested afterwards, with the difference that they will await the directions of the locality in future, instead of calling witnesses to ascertain the needs of the locality. What then are the temperance provisions contained in the Bill? There is, first of all, the provision for reduction of licences. The necessity for reduction is admitted by the trade, and it is admitted by the hon. and learned Gentleman who made out what no doubt he considered a good case for the trade, and one thing that struck me very much in his opening speech, when speaking from a good deal of experience, was that he said that a reduction would be of very little use except in the congested areas. Well, I am not disposed to disagree with him. Is not that exactly the case where you get reductions under this Bill?

MR. CAVE (Surrey, Kingston): I do not think I said that. I said that that was one of the cases in which reduction would be useful.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: Very well; I take the same view. It was the view taken by the majority of the Commission in their Report. Wherever you have an area where the population has congregated in one particular spot, and where the neighbourhood is sodden with alcohol, that is a case where reduction will be invaluable. But as everybody knows these are the poorest districts. Go to the well-to-do suburbs and you find they take very good care that there are no public-houses in their locality. There was a phrase which fell from the lips of the hon. Gentleman—I do not know whether inadvertently—when he talked of the nuisance of a public-house near your own dwelling. That is a nuisance with which the poor have to put up. The brewer never tolerates it; the rich do not put up with it; the powerful classes who control the benches of magistrates take good care that they never have this nuisance near them. But when you come to the poorer districts you find this incessant expenditure on drink which drags them down deeper and deeper into the depths of humanity where one dare not follow them further. These are the districts where you find this congestion, and that is what this Bill seeks to remedy. I remember what *The Times* said about these districts—

> "For a scene of horrid vice and filth and lust and furore, all drawn into one point and there fermenting, a man might search the world over and not find a rival to a thriving public-house in a low drinking neighbourhood."

These are the public-houses that this Bill will get rid of.

MR. GRETTON (Rutland): Will the right hon. Gentleman tell the House the date of that? [AN HON. MEMBER on the MINISTERIAL Benches: Does that alter the truth of it?]

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: It was March, 1881. Does the hon. Member—and he ought to know—deny that there are public-houses of that character now? [MINISTERIAL cries of "Answer," "Guilty," and "Order."] These are the public-houses that ought to be swept away, and it is about time that they were. We have heard a great deal about property and debentures, and of the determination of hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite to make this a property question. But what has been their contribution to the removal of this great social evil, which is sinking so many hundreds of thousands? They say: "Look at the Act of 1904; is not that doing everything?" Well, what is it doing? It is perfectly true that it is getting rid of a few small houses but its value is going to be less and less instead of more and more. It is getting rid of a cheaper class of houses at an extravagant price. A very remarkable article in the *Westminster Review* shows how the public-house knows that its time is coming. It is because of that that its accounts are fattened for the slaughter. A year in advance the patronage increases enormously: free drinks all round. That is why we have those swollen figures of miserable little public-houses here and there throughout the country. When we gradually get rid of these small ones there are others we must get rid of as well. Take those pointed at by *The Times*. They are crowded and doing an enormous trade even in these poor districts. That is our complaint; that is the evil. But you have to buy them out by and by, and where is your money to come from? There is none left. Your fund will be bankrupt when you begin the real business. There is another thing. As a matter of fact the Act of 1904 has done away almost entirely with penalising misconduct on the part of publicans. What is the public-house you get rid of now? The public-house is as badly conducted as ever, and ought to be abolished without one penny of compensation. But what happens? There comes the compassion, to which the hon. and learned Member for Kingston referred, for the poor licensee. The magistrates do not wish to deprive him altogether of compensation. If there was a sort of half-way house, and they could give him a small sum, it would be a different thing. But they have to give either the full value or nothing; and although there are cases of misconduct full compensation is given in order to get rid of the public-house. Under this Bill there will be no inducement for a publican to get rid of his house in that way; the inducement will be for the publican to behave in such a way as to survive. That will be a much more important incentive to the cause of temperance than the other. If you make it worth his while to behave so as to induce the local authority to give him compensation you will put him on his good behaviour. The most important part of the Bill, from a temperance point of view, is that it secures a free hand to the State at the end of the time-limit. That is what happened in Canada, and in the United States of America, and in Australia. I would not like to dogmatise as to the best methods of spreading temperance and suppressing excess. There are endless varieties of experiments that have been tried, and I do not know that we have got to the end of them. But why should we not experiment? After all, every social reform is an experiment; and, at any rate, these experiments in Canada, in others of our Colonies, and in parts of America, are promoting temperance. We should here have an absolutely free hand; that is the great thing to have. That is the great thing to aspire to in order to deal with these evils without this complication of property. What is the alternative of right hon. Gentlemen opposite? I have only met with one, from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Worcester, who spoke with special favour of Germany, where there was abundant opportunity for drinking and still sobriety. Virtue guaranteed by the State! Well, the right. hon. Gentlemen opposite are very fond of observing precedents. Germany is always either a bugbear or a model. The German Army, the German Navy, the German fiscal system, and now it is German beer! The right hon. Gentleman believes in the British workman and his wife, on the German model, going to a beer-house, eating black bread and drinking Lager beer, simply because a deputation from Birmingham saw German working-men doing it without getting drunk. Well, I have heard of the Canadian model. The Canadian drinks one-fourth of what we do in this country. He does it by means of legislation which deprives the working-man of unlimited opportunities of getting drunk. That is the ideal we wish to aspire to. The hon. and learned Gentleman who moved the Amendment made the only other contribution. And what is it? He has admitted the evil. He says something must be done, but his only contribution is censure, and criticism, and condemnation. What ray of hope is there in that? Has he no proposal to deal with this evil?

AN HON. MEMBER (on the OPPOSITION Benches): Give us a chance.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: We gave you a chance, and what a mess you made of it! The difficulty would have been infinitely less if it had not been for the contribution of your Bill. The evil is surely a gigantic one. That is not denied. There are 200,000 convictions for drunkenness, and that is only a token figure. I have served as a magistrate's clerk, and I knew these cases. They are not the case of a man who gets occasionally drunk, but of the hardened drunkard—not of a man who merely staggers along the street, but of a man who is a nuisance to his neighbours and is disorderly. They are the regular army of drunkards, and I am sorry to say, do not represent one-tenth of the drunkenness. And then there is the vaster number of people, who, without actually getting into the clutches of the law, and without actually getting drunk, spend upon drink the money which ought to provide the food, clothing, and shelter of their families, and actually gradually kill themselves with drink. I am not going to argue the problem of whether moderate drinking is useful, or harmless, or healthful. Let us assume that it is. At any rate, excess rots the constitution in every fibre, and who will deny that there is a prodigious excess in the drink bill of this country? £160,000,000 a year; £22 per family! The drink bill of Canada, if we had it here, would mean a drink bill of £40,000,000. A surplus of £120,000,000 would double the housing accommodation of the country. Take any test. An excess which depresses the vitality and the energies of the race is responsible for an enormous waste of national resources. It is not a material thing. It is the faculties of health and strength, of brain and heart, which go to make a great nation, which are depressed and destroyed by this agency. And if any one wants to know what it is doing let him study the effect of the sad excess of the drink Bill on the child-life of this country. I am not talking merely of the infantile mortality that is attributable to drink. There is a deeper wrong, and a more lasting wrong, that is inflicted upon the childhood of the nation, and through the children on the nation itself—upon our children who are ill-fed, ill-clad, ill-housed, ill-trained, through drunken mothers and through the selfishness of sodden fathers. What is the result? The nation has hundreds of thousands of those children growing up with enfeebled frames, quite incapable of bearing their allotted share of the burdens of citizenship. And what about the statistics of cruelty to children? The Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children reckon that in the course of eleven years they had to deal with half a million of children who had been treated with deplorable cruelty very largely through their drunken parents. Well, now we set out to protect them, and we are called robbers! All I can say is this, that if it were robbery, I would rather be such a robber than the friend of a trade which converts the love of parents into this torture and cruelty. Then there is the crime of the land. Great Judges have declared that most of the crime that comes before them is directly traceable to drink. Magistrates and police bear the same testimony. Take also those men and women who have devoted their lives to saving the human wreckage which is tossed about. They are unanimous in their testimony as to the effect of drink. Wherever you find those poor creatures gathered together, whose brain is shattered, wherever you find human beings huddled together in loathsome squalor and wretchedness, wherever you find men living in a condition of vice and crime, they all bear testimony that drink is the prime agency in the creation of all this unsightly mass of pain and degradation. And I say that this Government would fail abjectly in its duty if, through any base fear of any force or combination of forces, they were to shrink from doing all in their power to cut out from the social organism this most malignant growth that drains the vitality of the nation.

*MR. LYTTELTON (St. George's, Hanover Square): I think the right hon. Gentleman must have been well aware that those of us who oppose this Bill do not oppose it because we do not recognise the evils of drunkenness. The real point of the discussion which we embarked upon last week is, Is this Bill a true and good remedy for the evils which the right hon. Gentleman has so eloquently portrayed? And the very fact that what he has called the gigantic evil—the very fact that drunkenness is admitted to be a national vice—that very fact connotes the existence of a great number of people in this country who are victims of excessive indulgence, and a great number of others who sympathise with them in that infirmity. Directly that is admitted it becomes of vital importance not to add to the large number of human beings who are already affected by this infirmity any other persons in this country who love fair play and honest dealing, because depend upon it, the whole history of the subject referred to in that book which he mentioned shows that the one result of unfair and unduly harsh legislation is to produce, and produce almost immediately, a violent reaction which does more harm to the cause of temperance which we all desire to see advanced than if measures prudent and moderate are taken for the diminution of the evil. The right hon. Gentleman has given some arguments. I promise to follow them. He, in company with the Prime Minister, has laid down what he believes to be the fundamental condition of the law with respect to this subject, and I have no quarrel with their statement of the law so far as it goes, but I say it is incomplete. They have said that no lawyer would deny that the justices have power on the application for renewal of a licence not to renew, and that if they do not renew that licence no Court in the country, in the absence of fraud or corruption, will reverse that decision. I accept that statement of the law as far as it goes, but I think both the right hon. Gentlemen confuse the power to reduce any licence with the power to reduce all licences. I say that what is true of the unit is not true of the mass. Let me give a simple example. Supposing a bench, consisting of gentlemen like the hon. Member for the Spen Valley and the hon. Member for Westmoreland, and perhaps two colleagues with prohibitionist tendencies—supposing they were to sit as licensing justices, and were to embark upon a policy of total prohibition, say, in some large town, with the avowed intention of suppressing every licence in the district: I say, in the first place, that they would be taking upon themselves the function of Parliament, and, in the next place, it is a political impossibility, and I further submit to my right hon. friend the Prime Minister, as a matter of law, that that would be reversed by the Court of the King's Bench Division.

MR. LEIF JONES (Westmoreland, Appleby): How if they did it without the avowed intention?

*MR. LYTTELTON: I say the same thing would take place. I will not quote the judgments of the House of Lords, but I will put it to the Prime Minister, as a matter of law, that any bench of justices, whether they gave their reasons or not, if they instituted a system of prohibition of licences in this country would practically take upon themselves the function of Parliament, knowing perfectly well that Parliament would never sanction a system of prohibition.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: Does the right hon. Gentleman suggest that a bench of magistrates cannot take away the only licence in a parish?

*MR. LYTTELTON: I did not say so. I say that in a large town with, say, 100 licences, if the bench attempted to take away all those licences they would be restrained by law. I say that it would be a political impossibility. That fallacy of confusing what may be done in a particular instance with what may be done to all holders of licences has pervaded almost every speech that has been made in this House on the other side. The second fundamental error of these proposals of the Government, as I submit to the House, is this. The Government have wedded together two schemes which are absolutely incompatible. This Bill provides after the end of fourteen years notice for the destruction of licences and goodwill. Our Bill set up a mutual insurance fund which contemplated their continuance, and paying for all suppressed licences by contribution from the trade. Our Bill said no trade death without compensation. This Bill says universal slaughter after fourteen years, and the two things are incompatible. [MINISTERIAL cries of "No."] Perhaps that word "slaughter" is metaphorical. What I mean is the taking away of the full value of the licences at the end of that period. The survivors of the Government Bill are not solaced by compensation paid by the trade; on the contrary, they are burdened by compensation which is taken from them, not compensation paid to them. The compensation is taken from the trade during fourteen years, and they do not get it at the end of the period. Surely the unnatural union of these two schemes in this Bill, humorously described by the Solicitor-General as legislation based on precedent, should be described as legislation based upon confusion of thought. We have had a statement by the Prime Minister that the Act of 1904 was incorrectly construed by Mr. Justice Kennedy, and that the brewers counting on trade profits should not be reckoned as bidders in a valuation or auction of licences. That proposition is so wide of the mark that his own law officers, when arguing the case before Mr. Justice Kennedy, not only thought it unworthy of being presented to the Court at all, but as I read what they said at the time conceded the precise contrary, and, indeed, I think the House will readily see that to take away as a possible bidder in auction some of the best purchasers for the commodity sold would be an absurdity. I venture to say that if I put up a horse for auction, and excluded my right hon. friend the Member for Wimbledon as a possible bidder, no one would doubt that I was inflicting on myself a grievous injustice. The next fallacy which pervaded the speech of the Chancellor of the Exchequer was treating the time-limit as if at the end of it the state of things was going to be restored which existed before 1904. This time-limit, which I see a great many of the clergy have mistaken it to be, is not the time-limit recommended by Lord Peel and the minority of his Commission. It has often been claimed in this debate that the Government could not possibly be doing wrong, because they were giving fourteen years while Lord Peel's Commission recommended seven. That shows the same confusion of thought and the same inaccuracy of statement which has characterised a great deal of this debate. Lord Peel recommended that the state of things at the end of seven years should be that absolute liberty should be given to the justices to do what they liked with licences. [AN HON. MEMBER: And to Parliament.] Yes, and to Parliament. Does this Bill leave such liberty to the justices? Not at all. It is made imperative by this Bill that at the end of fourteen years the whole monopoly value shall be taken; that means the value of the licence, so that you have an absolutely different thing recommended by this Bill from that which was recommended by Lord Peel, and it is made far more onerous by the fact that along with it there is this steady drain with respect to compensation payable by the trade throughout the fourteen years. A return to the state of things before 1904 would be to subject licence-holders to the risk of reduction, but at the end of your time-limit you expose them to the certainty of destruction. The things are widely different. Now, may I briefly describe another argument of the Chancellor of the Exchequer? It formed a great part of the argument of hon. Gentlemen opposite, and particularly of the hon. Member for the Spen Valley. His argument was: The brewers have traded recklessly, and in consequence have enormously depreciated their property, but some of them have had the wit to unload half their responsibility and place it on the widow and orphan. Suppose that be true, I do not deny that some breweries have been badly managed, managed in a speculative way, and sold at inflated prices. In all trades there are similar cases. But are the people who bought the securities to be deprived of what value remains in them? Is the widow who has bought a preference share which was worth £1 and who paid £1 for it—if it has depreciated in value until it is worth only 1s. 6d., are you going to take that 1s. 6d. too.

SIR THOMAS WHITTAKER: My point is that she should only get the 1s. 6d., and not the £1.

*MR. LYTTELTON: Take the case of the owner of a share worth 1s. 6d. Does the hon. Member assume that at the end of the fourteen years it would still be worth 1s. 6d? I cannot imagine that he would suppose such a thing to be possible. The hon. Member desired to get rid of the suggestion I put to him by a somewhat suspicious device. First of all, he complained of the figures put before the House because they were the figures of experts, and he poured contempt upon experts' figures. Then he flung at the head of the House 140 balance sheets which he said experts had prepared for him, and to which he gave the weight of his own authority as an actuary. But I will accept from no one an analysis of 140 balance sheets without any particulars of them, without knowing their names or having an inspection of them. The hon. Member must be aware that, after be-littling experts, in bringing these things before the House he was putting before the House evidence that no one would accept. What are his qualifications for asking us to accept the conclusions he has arrived at from this mass of so-called evidence? The hon. Member satisfied himself that no injustice was done, and that nothing was to be apprehended by persons who had carried on their trade in a proper manner, and with proper reserves, because, he said, the reserve fund would be ample to refund them for their loss at the end of the time-limit. But the hon. Member, as a man of business, must know that a reserve fund is set up to meet the ordinary contingencies of trade, yet he thinks it fair that a reserve fund, which prudent and thrifty men have set up to meet ordinary contingencies, should be entirely absorbed in meeting a contingency which is created by himself and his friends. Was ever such an extravagant proposal put before business men? What conclusion does it lead us to? It leads us to this, that those men who set up a reserve fund, as hon. Gentlemen opposite suggest, to meet ordinary contingencies would be far worse treated than those who set up no such fund, and who have been denounced by hon. Gentlemen opposite who have enjoyed themselves by talking of rotten finance.

SIR THOMAS WHITTAKER: How will they be worse off?

*MR. LYTTELTON: I will tell the hon. Gentleman. I thought his acumen would have been sufficient to have enabled him to see that without my developing it. Suppose a company has set up a good reserve fund and the whole of that is taken at the end of fourteen years, the shareholders, instead of being paid off, lose it all. But in the case where the finance has been of the "rotten" kind which has been described by hon. Members, the shareholders then have the profits divided among them during the fourteen years. The result is that they have it, and the others have not.

AN HON. MEMBER: Does the right hon. Gentleman say that the whole of the reserve fund would go in the ordinary course at the end of the fourteen years?

*Mr. LYTTELTON: Yes. Having dealt with the balance sheets and the reserve fund I am sorry to say I am obliged to charge the hon. Member for the Spen Valley with another fallacy, into which I think the Chancellor of the Exchequer also fell. He stated that fourteen years notice was equivalent to ten and a half years purchase.

Sir THOMAS WHITTAKER: I said that fourteen years run was equal to ten and a half years purchase.

*Mr. LYTTELTON: Yes. He then went on to say that Mr. Justice Kennedy had given ten and a half years purchase in a particular case, and the Government were only doing what an eminent Judge thought fair in the case. I am really astonished that he should have put before the House of Commons such a proposition. This Bill cancels the capital a firm possesses. Supposing the profits of a business are £1,000, and supposing ten and a half years purchase is given for that business. That would make £10,500. The proprietor would at once have the sum in his pocket. If he invested it in a concern with similar risks to those of a brewery company he would earn £1,000 a year for the next fourteen years; and how much longer? The hon. Member must see—he cannot pretend not to see—that at the end of that time though he would have earned £1,000 a year for each of the fourteen years he would still have his capital of £10,500 in his pocket at the end. I defy anyone who has considered this subject, with an elementary knowledge of what purchase means, to deny that. If ten years purchase is not given to the proprietor, but a licence, if you like, to trade fourteen years is given to him, I agree that he would make £1,000 a year for each of the fourteen years, but at the end of that time he has neither capital nor licence. Therefore, in one case he is able to make an income for fourteen years and have the capital at the end, and in the other case he would have the opportunity to make an income but at the end would have no capital.

Sir THOMAS WHITTAKER: That is absurd.

*Mr. LYTTELTON: So far from its being absurd, I am satisfied it is absolutely true. Then the Chancellor of the Exchequer repeated again and again that in this debate the complaint on this side of the House was that there was no temperance in this measure, yet there was ruin for every person in the trade. That, he said, was our argument. Let me put this, as I think, parallel case. Take a railway and give it a short notice, and say that at the end of a certain time its monopoly shall be taken away, that its running powers shall be taken away, that everybody else shall be at liberty to compete with it in the carrying trade. Traffic at the end of that time will be continually increasing, but the railway will be ruined. You do not reduce the liquor consumed, but you take away from the publicans the licence for which they have paid thousands of pounds. You take away their goodwill. [A Voice: How?] You take away their goodwill because nobody who has made a reputation as a licensed victualler can obtain anything as the result of his skill at the end of fourteen years.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE: Where do we take that away? Does the right hon. Gentleman think that at the end of fourteen years every licence is to be taken away? I do not follow that argument.

*Mr. LYTTELTON: I am sorry that the right hon. Gentleman does not follow me. No one says that every licence is to be taken away, but if he will read his own Bill he will find that at the end of fourteen years it is imperative upon the justices to take away the monopoly value of every licence. That is, of course, the value of the licence.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE: I am very sorry to interrupt the right hon. Gentleman. I agree that in the Bill we do take away the monopoly value, but I tried to explain what we intended by monopoly value, and if the Bill does not carry that out, then of course, it can be made clear. Why does the right hon. Gentleman say that we take away not merely the monopoly value, which is the protection against competition, but also the good-will, which every other trader has? I should like to know.

*Mr. LYTTELTON: I say that in every case where you take away the licence you involve the good-will. If you take away the licence without compensation you commit the further injustice of taking away the good-will with it. I am perfectly ready to admit, and hon. Members may take the concession for what it is worth, that the State did make a mistake, a great mistake in former times, in granting monopoly values or, in fact, in offering monopoly values for nothing. I agree also—although I expect far more benefit for temperance from many other agencies—that a reduction of superfluous and undesirable licences is expedient. But I say that the Act of 1904 arrested and cured, so far as was just, the first mistake, namely, that of granting the monopoly value for nothing, because it provided that for the future every new licence should pay the true price or worth of the monopoly value.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE: That does not include the good-will.

*Mr. LYTTELTON: How can there be good-will with a new licence? How can the right hon. Gentleman say that good-will attaches to a business which is not begun? We laid an embargo on monopoly in regard to new licences and, of course there could be no such thing as good-will. Having made this concession, I ask the House to consider the position, not of the brewer, although I think he is just as much entitled to justice as anybody else, but of the owner of the free house, who is subject to the onslaught of this Bill. He might be a man who has put his whole savings into freehold property of this kind. This Bill and the state of things which it sets up produce a fundamental conflict between what is just and what is technically law, but the actual business of the situation makes the *status* of an annual tenancy, such as that which the hon. Member for Spen Valley would make it, absolutely inappropriate. This tenant who has just put the savings of a lifetime into his business has, perhaps, at the instance of the magistrates, spent one or two thousand pounds in structural alterations which are absolutely inappropriate to and inconsistent with the idea of a yearly tenancy. He has not been summoned for years, and is not bound to be, by Brewster Sessions, to apply for a renewal of his licence. There is an absolute difference between the case of a new licence and that of the renewal of a licence. In the absence of some cause which is to be specified to him, and which must be personal to him, he need not go to Brewster Session to make application for the renewal of his licence. What has this man seen going on in the very town where his house is placed? He has seen the owner of licensed premises opposite to his own, when they have been taken for a public improvement, receive full value for the perpetuity of the licence. He has seen a street improvement made, or an insanitary area cleared, in which the public-house itself may have been unfit for human habitation, but in regard to which the owner receives the full value of his licence as if it was to be perpetual. He knows, as was pointed out by my hon. and learned friend who began this debate, that the local authorities have exacted from the holders of licences the surrender of others. That means a very large payment in money, but they make it in order that they may enjoy a sense of security in regard to the one licence they are permitted to retain. But hon. Gentlemen opposite do not care about local authorities; they scorn them; they make them subject to the revision of the three gentlemen who are to be appointed. Nor do they care about Government Departments. They only laugh at the performance of the Minister for War. They think it is a very good joke, when a property is put up for sale, that a material fact, which was peculiarly within the knowledge of the vendor, was concealed from the buyer. I know that the Prime Minister and the Minister for War are quite incapable, of course, of doing such a thing in their own private capacity; I do not suppose that either of them knew anything about that particular case; but I say most seriously to the House that if two members of a private firm had been guilty of a similar transaction, I do not think that they would have cared to face the verdict of a jury or the pronouncement of any Judge. If hon. Gentlemen opposite think nothing of local authorities or of Government departments, perhaps they will think a little more of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, that august and austere body, who appeared last year to have sold a public-house for £3,000 for a term of eighty years. They compelled the lessee to enter into obligations for £6,000 more, and he had to carry the house on so as to sell the most liquor possible, and endeavour to obtain that the longest possible hours that any house in the Kingdom could be open should be the number of hours allocated to that house. That shows the view, not of a local authority or of a Government department, but of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners. The owner of the free house has seen all this; he has seen the protection which is given to that property by the law and also by the administration, because the Chairman of the Board of Inland Revenue had directed the collectors to assess the property as for perpetuity. He has seen the Government take this view of the property all this time, and although they have taxed him on that basis, yet that very Government which every citizen in this country would like to see the model of justice, tells him that he is entirely mistaken. If they were private individuals they would be accused of intolerable meanness in making exactions for the purpose of tribute on one scale of valuation, and when it was a question of expropriating property for their own benefit, taking another and quite a different scale of valuation. It does not stop even there. The mischief aimed at by this Bill is the redundancy of public-houses. Whose fault is this redundancy? It is the fault of the magistrates, yet the very man, the owner of the free house, who has in the last three years helped the trade to contribute £4,000,000 to facilitate reduction and diminish this redundancy, is asked in the name of justice to submit to a fresh and crushing blow. I can only say that I have endeavoured to look upon this matter not otherwise than in the public interest; I have endeavoured to consider the Bill to the best of my ability; but I cannot see the justice of it. I think it is impossible that the people of this country will ever see that it is justice. One single word about clubs. I am not going to say hard things about the Member for Appleby. I am quite aware that temperance reformers who have confronted this traffic get so full of passionate indignation against it that they are not altogether wise counsellors to follow as to the means of redressing the difficulties which beset it. But I do think that we are entitled to expect a more courageous attitude from the hon. Member, who, we are told by the Home Secretary, has spent his life, I am sure very honourably, in endeavouring to mitigate this evil. The hon. Member who has spent these long and honourable years in trying to meet this tremendous difficulty has sheltered himself behind my hon. friend the Member for the Walton Division. The hon. Member for Appleby said—

> "It is quite true that clubs are very mischievous, and if the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Walton will produce an Amendment I will consider it."

The hon. Member for the Walton Division is not a leader of the temperance movement, and I am sure that he is not a leading member of the United Kingdom Alliance. That is not a worthy or a courageous position. Those who propose what they imagine is going to be a remedy in this case are bound to propose it whole. Do not let us have the responsibility for one part which we conceive to be thoroughly bad, and do not let hon. Gentlemen in their timidity refuse to disclose on the Second Reading what they really believe to be the true and proper remedy.

MR. LEIF JONES (Westmoreland, Appleby): I only said that in reply to the challenge of the hon. and learned Member for Liverpool who asked us whether we should be ready to help him in amending the Bill. I assured him that all the help we could give him would be given. And we shall make our own Amendments, and I hope he will help us.

*MR. LYTTELTON: It is a pity that those efforts which the hon. Gentleman interrupted me to refer to have not been produced on an occasion so important. If I know anything about the subject at all, if the Bill passes in anything like its present shape it will lead to increased opportunities of drinking rather than to a diminution. The hon. Member for Spen Valley was good enough to say—

> "It does not lie in the mouth of you people opposite to complain of the amusements, even if they are somewhat vulgar, of clubs"—

I say nothing about vulgarity.

SIR THOMAS WHITTAKER: I did not say so.

*MR. LYTTELTON: I withdraw that—

> —"of the existence of clubs and the method in which they are carried on."

And I agree with him. I am glad to agree with him sometimes. I do not, speaking from this place, and knowing as I do, that the great mass of Members of this House have their own cellars and their own clubs, and most of them, partly for reasons of pleasure originally, and, lastly, for reasons of duty have placed, I think, a very severe limit upon the amount of liquor that they consume themselves—I say for people so accommodated it would be monstrous, and it would be most bitterly and justly resented by the working classes if an interference of any considerable kind was made, not with drinking clubs—that is nothing, it does not touch the question—but with the social clubs of working-men. It is absolutely impossible to deal with these clubs. How can you with any countenance go to working-men, and say: "You work hard all day, your surroundings are grey and monotonous, you may not go with your fellows into a club, play dominoes, chess, and billiards there and enjoy the refreshment which we all enjoy in our clubs."

AN HON. MEMBER: Nobody says that.

*MR. LYTTELTON: The hon. Member thinks nobody says that. Then we are all agreed. If we agree that you cannot interfere with social clubs, and drinking must go on in them, I say that every public-house which you extinguish in a district in which there is a demand for drinking, and hon. Members know perfectly well that there is a desire for drinking in many places, in every case a social club will spring up, and neither this House nor any person in this country will feel himself strong enough to interfere with them. I, therefore, say that this Bill is based upon a fallacy. I have always thought myself that social measures quite different from these will do and have done a great deal towards a reduction of drinking. I am really myself fairly optimistic about the continued improvement in the country. Drinking is rapidly diminishing. Better housing and better recreation will do more in a year than such legislation as this would do in twenty. When you really have to admit that you cannot interfere with social clubs—and that is admitted on the opposite side altogether—then I say that the many injustices and wrongs which you perpetrate by the first part of this Bill are rendered absolutely useless, because there will and must grow up clubs to replace the publi-chouses which you reduce. Let me beg the House in conclusion not to identify with the cause of temperance injustice as exists in this Bill.

*MR. HERBERT ROBERTS (Denbighshire, W.): I am well aware that under existing conditions it is necessary for those who take part in this debate to be brief. I desire in the very few moments in which I shall occupy the time of the House to confine what I have to say to the attitude of those whom I specially represent in Wales towards this Bill. But before I refer very briefly to the feeling of Wales in support of this Bill there is one remark only of a general character which I desire to make in regard to the Bill. What we all desire is that through legislation we may make it possible in future for all sections in this country to unite in the promotion of practical temperance reform. The right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down has admitted the necessity of reduction as an important factor in any future effective temperance reform. In a debate of this kind it is well for us to try to find out points of agreement on both sides of the House, and to discover, if we can, the root cause of the lines of cleavage of opinion on both sides. The right hon. Gentleman has admitted, speaking for himself, and I think he speaks for the majority of his Party, that there is a general consensus of opinion as regards the necessity for further reduction. The root cause, I think, which divides the two sides of the House in their attitude towards this Bill is the element of property. I am not going to dwell even for a moment on the many aspects of that problem, but until we get rid in some way or other—until we change the present situation and get rid of the political issue from the sphere of temperance effort, it will be impossible for us to make any very great advance on the lines of temperance reform. To my mind this is the great achievement of this Bill. I believe when it has had time to work, it will be the means of getting rid of this political issue from the sphere of licensing. That will be of enormous value, because it will put an end to the alliance between the interests behind the trade and one political Party in the State. I do not impute any conscious motive in this matter. I know a great many Members opposite deplore this connection, but at the same time we have to deal with facts, and so long as this continues I believe it will be impossible for us to get rid of this political issue, and there will be a barrier in front of all real temperance progress. My main desire in rising is to say one or two words with regard to the attitude of Wales in reference to this Bill. The Prime Minister when introducing the Bill admitted the fact, which we have all known for many years, that temperance opinion in Wales is more advanced than in other parts of the country, and the people of Wales appreciate the importance of that statement, coming from the lips of the Prime Minister. It is unnecessary, I think, for me to refer in more than a sentence or two to the proofs of that proposition as they have been presented from time to time to the House of Commons. The first proof I would advance as to the public opinion of Wales on licensing matters is that ever since 1868—for forty years—at every general election there has been returned an overwhelming number of Members identified with the views of the country upon temperance reform. Secondly, I would advance the fact that in 1881 the people of Wales demanded Sunday closing, and that demand resulted in the passing of the Welsh Sunday Closing Act of that year. Further, in 1889 there was another test as to the opinion of Wales in reference to Sunday closing which was brought about through the inquiry of the Welsh Sunday Closing Commission. There, again, we have in the unanimous recommendations of that Commission evidence that Wales at that time was unalterably attached to the continuance of the Welsh Sunday Closing Act. Then, and this is the last proof I shall bring before the House, we have the fact that to-day in this House all the Members for Wales have been returned to support the demand for the special provisions in the Bill relating to Wales. I think this is a political fact, if not unique, almost without precedent. There are two points on which there are special provisions relating to Wales. The first is the extension of the Welsh Sunday Closing Act to the county of Monmouth. For many years it has been the desire of the people of Monmouthshire to obtain the benefits of the Welsh Sunday Closing Act. In 1899 the Peel Commission unanimously reported in favour of such extension, and we have to-day all the Members for the county in favour of this extension, and we have also the decisive vote of the majority of the Monmouth County Council and of all the representatives of public bodies in the county. The advantages of extending Sunday Closing to Monmouthshire are beyond dispute. The County of Monmouth is a part of Wales in feeling, race, and history, and for the purposes of education and local affairs it has already been connected with Wales. The great majority of the people of that county welcome this Sunday Closing provision. The Bill also grants to the people of Wales and Monmouth immediate larger local option powers. In regard to the principle of popular control Wales has for many generations expressed itself with no uncertain voice. At every election for years local option has been one of the foremost points in the political programme of Wales, and in 1891 and 1893 Bills dealing with this subject passed through the Second Reading stage in this House. It is not possible to go into the precise effect of the granting of these larger local option powers to the people of Wales, but it will mean a substantial reduction of licences in Wales and Monmouth during the running of the time-limit. With regard to clubs I do not for a moment deny that grave difficulties have arisen from the establishment of merely drinking clubs, but I wish to point out that this has not been the result or effect of Sunday closing in the Principality. In Wales the proportion is one club to every 7,400 of the population, whereas in England there is one club to every 4,600 There is a very strong feeling in Wales, which is a Sunday closing area, that it may be necessary to have a certain amount of special treatment for clubs. I admit that the clauses of this Bill are a distinct advance upon the present condition of the law. I am prepared even to say that I do not think those who are interested in temperance reform in the country have sufficiently realised the extent of the powers which will be granted to the licensing justices in the provisions as they now stand in the Bill. But these are Committee points. When we come to the Committee stage of the Bill I feel sure the Government will be prepared to consider any practical suggestion in the direction of strengthening these clauses. I wish to refer only to two out of the many important issues which are at stake in the passing of this Bill. The carrying of this measure will show that the Government think more of what they deem to be the good of the country than political expediency. That is one of the brightest signs in the present political situation. I see in this Bill the possibility of a new chapter of temperance reform. The reason we now stand in a different position with regard to hope for the future in this movement is that the temperance question has become a vital one, and there is now a chance of uniting all sections of opinion in the country desirous of doing something for the good of the people on the side of practical, effective, temperance reform. I can say without any hesitation that Wales heartily and unitedly supports the Government in regard to this Bill. Wales sees in this measure a new hope, a new opportunity, and a new responsibility, and her people will show the Government by an effective administration not only of the general provisions but also the special provisions relating to Wales that these proposals have not been made in vain.

LORD R. CECIL (Marylebone, E.): The speech to which we have just listened is unquestionably one of considerable interest, but it shows clearly the difficulty we are necessarily under in discussing the question of the Second Reading of this Bill. Hon. Members opposite have been engaged in pointing out that they alone are the recipients and possessors of the moral sense of the country; that they represent the light, and all who are opposed to them represent darkness. That must be a very consoling opinion to hon. Members opposite, and I trust they will be able to bear the shock that awaits them when they court the opinion of their fellow countrymen. I only propose on this occasion to deal with what, after all, are the two main principles of the Bill, namely, the question of the reduction of licences and the question of the time-limit. I think the first of these principles can be dealt with briefly. It has been very strongly urged on the other side of the House that a reduction of licences must necessarily mean an increase of temperance in this country. I have waited four days, and still await any evidence that that proposition is true. The only case cited is that of Liverpool. No one disputes, and no one has ever thought of disputing, that you may grant so large a number of licences in a crowded district as to militate against the cause of temperance. But the only question that arises in regard to this Bill is whether when you have got the proper proportion of licences to population any further reduction of licences is likely to lead to an increase in temperance. That is the only question you have got to consider. It is no use telling us what happened when you had free trade in licences in Liverpool, for it does not follow that after you have reduced licences from a wildly excessive number to a moderate number you promote temperance by a still further reduction. The arguments of the Under-Secretary to the Home Department on this point were really not worthy of him. He picked out two or three towns or groups of towns about which statistics are given and made a comparison by which he sought to establish some kind of connection between the number of licences granted and convictions for drunkenness. I have not heard anything in this debate which takes us further than the statement made on the authority of the Government in the Licensing Statistics for 1907, namely, that an increase in licensed premises does not necessarily lead to an increase in the convictions for drunkenness. That seems to me to be a sober and accurate statement of the relation between licences and drunkenness, and I have not yet heard anything which induces me to think we can carry the matter further than that by the evidence. Assuming for a moment that it is desirable in the interests of temperance to reduce licences, I desire to say a word about the licensee, and whether you are affording fair compensation by your provision for compensating those whose licences are suppressed. What are the facts with regard to this point? It is admitted that the effect of your proposed legislation will be to diminish the amount paid by way of compensation to something like one-fifth of what is now being paid. That is not disputed, and it cannot be disputed after the facts cited by my hon. and learned friend the Member for Kingston in his masterly speech at the beginning of this debate. Is it really open to dispute that you are going to reduce the amount of compensation paid—I do not care whether it is a fifth or a fourth—to something infinitely less than that paid before? The answer given by the hon. Member for the Spen Valley division, and with a great deal more florid oratory by the Chancellor of the Exchequer this afternoon, is that it is all because public-houses are assessed too low.

SIR THOMAS WHITTAKER: Hear, hear.

LORD R. CECIL: I am glad that I have appreciated the hon. Member's argument rightly. Does it not throw a lurid light on the perception of justice which prevails on this subject? He says—

> "Because you are assessed too low, therefore, we are not going to give you a fair price for your property."

If it does not mean that, what does it mean?

SIR THOMAS WHITTAKER: Assess at the proper figure.

LORD R. CECIL: The hon. Member seems to think that public-houses are assessed on different principles from those which are applied to other industrial concerns. The hon. Member is completely mistaken. There seems to me to be confusion in the minds of some hon. Members as to what assessment really is. It is not a tax on the profits of a business. That is the delusion which runs through the whole of the argument of hon. Members opposite. If they do not say so, I am at a loss to explain their argument at all. You are assessed on the value of the house and not on the value of the business. There is a good deal to be said for something in the nature of a municipal income-tax, but we have not got it, and therefore it is quite plain that to take the assessable value as the value for the purposes of compensation is to take a completely misleading standard. I see the hon. and learned Member for Reading here. Let me give an illustration from our own experience. Both he and I occupy chambers in the Temple. I am not aware of their relative rental value, but I assume that they are about the same. But the profits of the business which he transacts is out of all proportion to the profits I am able to make. If we were going to expropriate the hon. and learned Gentleman, we should have to compensate him on quite a different footing from that which I am afraid would be just compensation in my own case. It is precisely the same when you come to deal with any of these industries. Therefore, to take the assessable value and say that it is the basis of compensation when you are going to take away property is to take an entirely misleading basis. I wish to make it clear in specific terms to the House that I do not recognise two standards of compensation. By compensation I mean payment which shall recoup a person injured for the injury that is being done to him. It must be complete *solatium*, complete re-integration and compensation for the injury done. What you have to do by this Bill is to provide a scale which will carry that out. Therefore, whether it be desirable to reduce licences further or not, I feel very confident that the House, when it comes to consider the scale on which that reduction is to be carried out, if it be proposed to deal with this trade with fairness and justice, will not adhere to the scale in the Bill.

I desire to say a word or two about the time-limit, which is the other main principle of the measure. There are, as I understand it, not less than three different meanings, or, at all events, three different objects, with which the time-limit is proposed to be enacted by those who are in favour of that principle. In the first place it is said that it is desirable to restore to the justices their freedom of action. If that means that it is desirable to place the country with regard to licensing in the position it occupied before 1904, I for one am against that proposal altogether. I have never been able, with all my Toryism, to bring myself to admire the system of licensing which prevailed before 1904. The only defence of it, so far as I know, is that it had existed for a very long time. Surely the great object of licensing should be the impartial and equal exercise of jurisdiction which would produce somewhat similar results all over the country, so that there should be no room for thinking by one set of traders that they were being treated less fairly than another set of traders in another part of the country. What were the facts before 1904? You had in a great many instances magistrates on the bench who had great reluctance to take away licences altogether, and in practice licences were renewed whether they were redundant or not, provided that the licence-holders were not guilty of any offence against the licensing laws. But in just a few cases, where you had very earnest and righteous temperance reformers on the bench, you had licences swept away on a wholly different scale. I regard that as a thoroughly bad system, and I am not afraid to say so in this House, and anything that would restore that system appears to me to be a thoroughly retrograde step. Another object of the time-limit is that it is thought desirable as a first step towards local option. The Prime Minister was good enough to give an answer at Question-time from which it is clear—and it is a very important matter—that unless further legislation takes place at the end of fourteen years a system of local option will automatically come into operation in the country. I say deliberately that, if that is the effect of the Bill, it is a very bad piece of legislation indeed. What could be worse than for this House to say that fourteen years hence a system of local option will be introduced without regard to the state of affairs then existing? Surely that is far too important for the House to pretend to prejudge in that matter. It is for those who sit in this House then to say whether such a measure should be passed or not. I cannot go on arguing this afternoon whether local opinion is desirable or not, but if we are to enact it at all it should be after full consideration of the circumstances prevailing at the time it is enacted and not by a side wind of this description. But these two objects are not generally put forward by the authors of the Bill. Both the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Solicitor-General either made no reference, or only slight reference, to local option. They said that the great object was the recovery by the State of the monopoly value. So far as I am concerned, if by monopoly value is meant that it is a desirable thing in itself that a special pecuniary privilege should not be conferred by the licence upon the licence-holder, I agree that it is desirable that that should not be done. I say quite frankly that a privilege of that kind should not be conferred upon the trade. It is necessarily an objectionable thing. I feel that very strongly. We have heard, and I must say, so far as I am concerned, I have heard with some impatience, a number of criticisms directed against the agitation which the brewers have carried on, or are said to have carried on, against the Bill. It is easy to criticise in such a matter as that, but hon. Members who criticise ought to remember that those engaged in this trade regard themselves as threatened with financial ruin, and it is absurd to take this or that instance from this or that speech made under that kind of provocation and say: "This is really not quite in good taste. We cannot approve of statements of that kind," or observations of that description. If you are seized by the throat by a footpad in a dark lane—[MINISTERIAL cries of "Oh!"]—I am not accusing hon. Gentlemen opposite of being footpads, but if you are threatened with a great danger, whatever it may be, you seize the first weapon that comes to your hand, and you do not think too carefully whether the method of self-defence you employ is that which is sanctioned by the Queensberry rules, which regulate such things. I only say that because I do not wish it to be thought for a moment that I associate myself with the criticism which I think has been unfairly directed to some of the things which have been said and done in the course of the agitation. I agree that it is an unfortunate state of affairs that the great pecuniary interests which are necessarily affected by the acts of the central Government should regard it as a necessary duty to take part in political agitation, not on general grounds, but in order to defend their own particular interests. If the proposals in this Bill were merely confined to removing that state of affairs and restoring to the State the monopoly value of the licences on fair terms and without any injury to the trade I should not myself be opposed to them at all. Perhaps the House will pardon me making reference to some observations which were made by a relative of my own, Lord Hugh Cecil, in a debate in 1904. He is reported to have stated that there was something to be said for a time-limit, and that, at any rate, it was possible to engraft a time-limit on the legislation of 1904. I have taken the trouble to read that speech and I do not think that anybody sitting on this side would differ from it for a moment. What did it amount to? All he laid down in the earlier part of the speech was that a time-limit and a compensation-limit were inconsistent; that if you had a time-limit, you could not go on having a compensation-limit; and that if you had a time-limit it should be a limit of twenty or thirty years, or something which would be a perfectly fair time to enable the trade not to suffer injury from such legislation. I agree, and I think we all agree that on these terms there would be no great objection to such a time-limit, or some similar proposal which would produce a similar result provided that no injustice was done to the individual. What does the Government proposal amount to? It is a great mistake to suppose that it will affect nothing more than the monopoly value. It is admittedly the first step towards a much larger measure—to deprive the licensed trade, not only of the monopoly value, but of all their property in licences. It is admittedly a confiscatory measure. Take again the hon. Member for Spen Valley. He says that the effect of it would be—and he gave most elaborate figures to prove it—to deprive the licensed trade of half the value of its capital at the end of fourteen years. He takes the capital value at £200,000,000, and taking the monopoly value alone the effect of the Bill will be to deprive the trade of £100,000,000. Now, the moment that is admitted it appears to me to be quite futile to discuss with great elaboration, as the Chancellor of the Exchequer did, what is the exact legal position of the licence-holders. You are going to deprive them of £100,000,000 at the end of fourteen years. [MINISTERIAL cries of "No."] That is what the hon. Member for Spen Valley said. What is the use of talking of the £100,000,000 representing merely an expectation of a property right? One hundred millions is a hundred millions; and if you are going to take it you are going to deprive the previous owners of that sum, unless indeed the Government are prepared to go as far as the hon. Member and reject all proposals for compensation altogether. I could understand a Bill based on the theory that you were not taking away any property at all, and that, therefore, the license-holders are not entitled to compensation at all. But if you once admit that they are entitled to compensation and that they have £100,000,000 which you are going to take from them, then the whole question arises, and in fact the effect of your legislation, as the hon. Member for Spen Valley said, will be to deprive them of that money. And how does the hon. Member for Spen Valley meet the difficulty? He has an astounding theory which I will not deal with it at length because the hon. and learned Member for St. George's, Hanover Square, has done so; but the suggestion is that as long as you only take the reserve fund of a company you will do it no harm; if you take it in your stride, you give it all the compensation you need. That seems to me to be a curious mental attitude when you are dealing with companies or individuals. You may take it if you call it a reserve fund without doing very much harm, but if you call it the savings of a company and take it then you do harm. Let us suppose that a private individual has £2,000 a year, and he divides among his shareholders £1,000 and puts aside and invests £1,000 as a reserve fund. Would you not view with astonishment a financial proposal by which the State for one purpose or another proposed to sieze the whole of the savings of that private individual? That is precisely what you are going to do if you take the reserve funds of a company. You may take the savings of a good company, but when you come to a bad or struggling company without any reserve fund, you will be taking the income of the shareholders to the extent of £100,000,000. We are told that these companies have been badly financed. Are you going to fine brewery companies £100,000,000 because you think they have been badly financed? That is the meaning of it. What does it matter that the directors of brewery companies have cheated their shareholders? I put it in the boldest language. How does that defend the view that you take? The hon. Member for Spen Valley says that it is only a contribution of £3,000,000, £4,000,000 or £5,000,000 a year for this great and wealthy interest. I understand him to mean that it would be a kind of taxation, but it is absolutely distinct from a contribution by individuals to the general purposes of the State. The whole essence of a tax is that it should be as far as possible a contribution of equal sacrifice on the part of all affected by it. But that is not the proposal in the Bill; and if that proposal is not confiscation I do not know the meaning of the word. You propose to take the money of a special set of people who are not to have any advantage from the Government of the country at all. [MINISTERIAL cries of "No."] It is not for the purpose of taxation at all, but in order to carry out a great moral reform. If you are to hold that this money is a mere form of taxation, the same argument can be used for any form of confiscation. I do not think that it would be an exaggeration to say that it would be the most tyrannical action any Government ever attempted in this country or in any country in the world. Let us understand what you are going to do. On the admission of the hon. Member for Spen Valley you are going to deprive a certain trade interest of £100,000,000. [AN HON. MEMBER on the MINISTERIAL BENCHES: No.] Yes, that is what the hon. Member for Spen Valley says—at the end of fourteen years.

AN HON. MEMBER (on the MINISTERIAL Benches): It is to pay the debenture-holders. The reserve fund is only applied to paying-off the debentures.

LORD R. CECIL: The hon. Member is entirely mistaken. Even that only applies to a small number of companies. The great mass of companies would have to meet this appropriation without any reserve fund at all. You are going to take this money from the debenture holders or the shareholders not for the purposes of State, but for the purposes of a moral reform. There is only one possible explanation of a proposal of this kind. The authors of this Bill do not regard the members of this trade as entitled to common justice. I have looked carefully through almost all the speeches delivered in favour of the Bill, and running right through them there is an undercurrent very apparent—especially in the speech of the Chancellor of the Exchequer—that this trade is a great force for evil in the country and that in dealing with it it would be absurd and indeed wicked to treat it with ordinary justice. [MINISTERIAL cries of "No."] What otherwise was the meaning of the hon. Member for Spen Valley's quoting the slave trade, and saying that the slave owners were not compensated? The meaning of the hon. Member for Spen Valley was that we are treating the trade much more generously than we treated the slave owners; and that the fact remained that the licensed trade is not entitled to as good treatment as the slave owners.

*MR. LUPTON (Lincolnshire, Sleaford) made an observation which was not fully audible.

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order. If the noble Lord is interrupted so frequently he will never reach the end of his remarks.

LORD R. CECIL: The hon. Member generally has the courage of his convictions, and only said aloud what a great many Members opposite are thinking. What other meaning can be attached to these tremendous denunciations of liquor with which we are all agreed, but which have no meaning in this debate unless it is to show that the Government is justified in treating this trade in a way they would never think of treating other trades in the country? I take another view. I think that just in proportion as your object is an object of morality; just in proportion as you consider yourselves as representatives of Light dealing with the Powers of Darkness; just in proportion as you are trying to carry out a reform to elevate the masses, just in that proportion you are bound to behave with a scrupulous adherence to justice. I adhere to the old Hebrew prophet's denunciation of robbery for a burnt offering. By all means if you think it right to offer a great sacrifice upon the altar of temperance, do it, but pay for it yourself. I think that the episcopal leaders, or any other leaders, are making a very grave mistake if they are lending their countenance to the proposition that, because you are dealing with a trade to which great evils attach, you are entitled to mete out to that trade a lower form of justice than to any other trade in the country.

*SIR RANDAL CREMER (Shoreditch, Haggerston): The proposals of the Bill which have been most severely dealt with are the time-limit, compensation, and working-men's clubs. It is in regard to the latter that I wish to address for a few minutes some observations to the House, and I think my justification for doing so will be admitted when I state that I have been for twenty-three years a member of a workmen's club. These clubs have been so much maligned because, as I think, they are so little understood by the House, and if hon. Members had more practical acquaintance with them they would deal with them much more tenderly than they have dealt with them during the course of this debate. With regard to the questions of time-limit and of compensation, I do not propose to say very much, although they are very important features of the Bill, but in reference to workmen's clubs I think I have some claim to speak on their behalf. There are 7,000 workmen's clubs in the United Kingdom, and 1,108 of them belong to what is called the Club and Institute Union. I am only speaking on behalf of the affiliated clubs, which have a membership of 331,275, so that I have a considerable constituency to speak for. I admit that some workmen's clubs are by no means ideal institutions, but that they are an enormous improvement upon the public-house is the point for which I am contending. If a man or a woman enters a public-house and attempts to rest there or remain for five minutes he or she must drink. They cannot stop there without spending money and drinking, but in a club they can remain just as long as they please without the expenditure of a single farthing; all the difference between "may" and "must," between "permission" and "compulsion." I therefore assert without any fear, not of contradiction, but of disproof, that the workmen's club is an enormous improvement upon the public-house. During the twenty-three years that I have been a member of this workmen's club I never seen a member drunk on or off the premises. I do not say that there have not been instances of the kind, but I have never seen them, and I have visited that club hundreds of times, at all times of the day up to eleven and twelve o'clock, when it closes. What public-house can be cited where no instance of drunkenness has been witnessed by people living in the neighbourhood? I have given the case of a club, where we had at one time nearly 2,000 members. It has existed for nearly forty years, so it is not one of the mushroom clubs which have sprung up for drinking purposes. It has had a long existence, it is one of the oldest clubs in London and one of the best managed as well as the most numerous in its members. There is also the advantage in favour of the club against the public-house, although I do not suppose that this will commend itself to the consideration and support of my temperance friends, that you get a purer and cheaper article in the workmen's club than you do in a public-house. There is also a better moral atmosphere in the club. Anyone who has visited a public-house bar and heard the kind of conversation which goes on there knows perfectly well—if he has any acquaintance with a workmen's club—that if such language were repeated in a club the member using it would be expelled if he continue you not only "may" drink if you please in d to use language of that kind. So that club against "must" in a public-house, but you get a better and purer article and you are also surrounded with a very much better moral atmosphere than you would have in the public-house. There are many other advantages connected with the workmen's club as against the public-house with which I will not trouble the House, but I appeal to Members who are present and who do me the favour to listen to what I say to judge of these clubs with an open mind, and not to be influenced by prejudices and statements which have come to be regarded by Members inside, and people outside the House as gospel truth, to the effect that there is an enormous amount of drinking which goes on in these clubs which ought to be put down. I do not know whether hon. Members have studied carefully the Bill of 1902. I was a member of the Grand Committee which had that Bill under consideration, and it was due to the tact and judgment of the late Lord, then Mr., Ritchie, that that Bill was passed through that Committee and through this House. At that time the clubs for whom I am speaking were good enough to entrust me with their interests, and I had occasion to thank Mr. Ritchie when the Bill reached its Third Reading for the consideration and courtesy with which he had met us. He did what no one else had been able to do, although for several years attempts had been made to pass a Bill through this House for the better regulation of clubs, and I have no hesitation in saying that that Bill has done a great deal for the purification of club life in this country. One of the great objects Mr. Ritchie had in view, in which I cordially supported him, was to put an end to the bogus clubs and the gambling hells that were then to be found in London and the country. What effect has that Act had? It has had the effect of getting struck off the register of 302 clubs most of them of the character to which I have referred. I am sorry to say that a few are still to be found that have not been removed from the register, but they would have been had the local authorities done their duty and taken steps to prevent the continuance of these debasing institutions. I do not say that the whole of the 302 clubs were struck off the register because of their illegal practices, as a few of them ceased to exist and were removed from the register in consequence, but the clubs for whom I am speaking contend that so much good work in the direction of purification has been accomplished that there is no necessity at the present moment for further legislation on the subject. If the Act of 1902 is continued and rigidly enforced by the local authorities in another year or two I believe every bogus club and every gambling hell will have been got rid of and the process of purification be practically complete. That is the first point that we urge, and I think the Government have made a mistake in overloading their Bill by introducing new proposals in regard to clubs. There were difficulties enough in the way of passing this Bill without burdening it with a proposal of that kind. If, however, there was any necessity for further legislation on the subject it might have been done next year by amending the Act of 1902. We contend, however, that there is very little if any necessity for further legislation in regard to workmen's clubs. But if the Government were convinced that there was an absolute necessity for further legislation on the subject and that that legislation should be embodied in the present Bill they might have made it prospective instead of retrospective, because the clubs that exist to-day with few exceptions are of such a character that no further interference is required on their behalf. As evidence in support of my contention I will quote a few particulars of few clubs. I take the club with which I have been personally connected for twenty-three years and which has been in existence for forty years. The hon. Member for Liverpool said the clubs were increasing in numbers and members. This is not our experience in London, it is rather the reverse. The club I am alluding to has a membership of 1,499, whereas a few years ago we had nearly 2,000 members. Our drink bill, which includes spirits, beer and minerals and also tobacco and cigars, amounted for the last year to £3 1s. 3d. per member. I have taken four clubs from the east, west, north, and south, I have given no preference to any particular district. The one in the east which I have quoted is the Borough of Hackney Club. That at Hammersmith the other end of London has a membership of 616, and there the expenditure per head of the members upon spirits, beer, minerals, tobacco, and cigars is £4 17s. 2d., I take another, which has the largest number of members in London, the Mildmay Radical Club and Association, in Stoke Newington. It has a membership of 1,622, and they spend per head upon drink, etc., £3 14s. 11d. The fourth, in the south, is the Hatcham Liberal Club, with a membership of 521, and its drink bill is at the rate of £4 3s. 6d. per head per year. The average expenditure per week per member in the 1,108 affiliated clubs upon beer, spirits, minerals, tobacco and cigars amounts to 1s. 2d. Members will admit that that is a very trifling amount, and it is only because I wish to disabuse hon. Members' minds of their prejudices that I quote these figures. I say without fear of contradiction that a man who goes to a public-house often spends more in the course of one visit than a member of these clubs spends in a whole week. The clubs are therefore a great improvement upon public-houses, and I should be sorry to see them interfered with because of the beneficial change they are effecting in the drinking habits of the people. What would be the effect on many single workmen if these clubs did not exist? When I first came to London as an operative joiner I had no friends or home comforts, and was in the position in which hundreds of thousands of workmen in London and our big towns are to-day, a single man lodger. There were no workmen's clubs in those days, and a workmen had no alternative but to spend his evenings either in his dreary lodgings, the streets, or the public-houses. What is a man to do, when out of work and walking about the streets looking for employment all day. What is he to do in the evening. Is he to go to the public-house where he must drink, or into a club which he can join for 2d. or 3d. a week and smoke his pipe and talk to his fellow members without spending a penny—even if he has it to spend. What will be his position if the clubs are harrassed and penalised out of existence. There is one other club I will refer to that has 670 members, and is frequently referred to as the best club in London. What do we spend in this club, and I commend these figures to hon. Members and friends of temperance in order that they may consider whether they will bring "the best club in London" within the provisions of this Bill. I have taken these returns from the balance sheet issued by the Kitchen Committee, and I find the drink bill of this House from 3rd February to 20th July, 1907—five months—was £4,846 11s. 10d., or an average per member for the five months of £7 4s. 8d. So that if the House sat for twelve months and my calculations for the workmen's clubs were for twelve months, the rate of expenditure per member for that period would, exclusive of minerals and cigars, amount to £17 17s. 1½d. as against an average per member in the four workmen's clubs I have quoted of £3 19s. 2½d. including tobacco and cigars.

MR. MARKHAM (Nottinghamshire, Mansfield): The total amount of whiskey consumed in the smoke-room of this House amounts to three bottles a week. You can get that from Collins.

*SIR RANDAL CREMER: I am quoting from the balance sheet of the Kitchen Committee.

MR. AUSTIN TAYLOR (Liverpool, East Toxteth): Are strangers included in both cases?

*SIR RANDAL CREMER: Yes, I have included strangers and friends in both cases, and, from my experience in previous Parliaments I believe, that friends, many of them of the other sex, were in the past, largely responsible for such heavy expenditure. ["Oh!"] But so far as this Parliament is concerned, I admit, and I say it advisedly, and gladly, that I believe this is the soberest Parliament that has ever sat in St. Stephen's. But it is said there is still an amount of drinking that takes place in workmen's clubs that ought to be put an end to. I have already admitted they are by no means ideal institutions, but I say they are a great improvement upon public-houses and that they might well be let alone. I am sorry that the Government have tacked on to this Bill the clauses referring to clubs, as I believe they have thereby increased their difficulties in getting this Bill through Parliament, and believing that the Bill generally is a beneficient measure. I am sincerely anxious to see it passed into law as soon as possible. I have only one more word to say with regard to confiscation. I have listened to almost every speech that has been made upon the subject. Attempts have been made to frighten us by the repeated use of this word "confiscation." I am not afraid of it. The practices of the ground landlords of London have familiarised us with the process. I have recently asked questions in this House concerning the practice of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, the Commissioners of Woods and Forests, and other Departments of the State who deal with property, and I find they all act alike. I have known several instances in London, on the estates of the Duke of Westminster, Lord Portman, the Duke of Norfolk and Lord Southampton, where the leases having expired, public-houses, shops and dwelling houses have been pulled down without a penny of compensation being given. Instances are continually occurring where public-houses are closed and tradesmen, who have spent considerable sums on improving their premises have found themselves deprived of their means of livelihood, and when their time-limit—the lease—expired they did not get a farthing compensation from their ground landlords. Such repeated instances of confiscation by ground landlords long ago led me to the conclusion that what the ground landlord has a right to do, what Government Departments have a right to do, this House has a right to do, and I shall vote for the Bill.

MR. HARWOOD (Bolton): I should like to adopt the words of the last speaker and say I should not intervene in this debate if I thought any words of mine would militate against the passing of this Bill. I wish very much to see it pass. But during this debate I have felt inclined to doubt whether this Bill is what it professes to be, namely, a Licensing Bill. I think if the Government had gone to the country, first, on the plain issue that, as everybody acknowledges, there were too many drinking shops, and said, "We wish you to help us to do away with the superfluous ones on fair terms," and, secondly, on the plain issue of whether the monopoly granted by the nation belonged to the nation, and could be resumed by the nation, the country would have gone with them. If our temperance friends of thirty years ago had been a little more reasonable we should certainly have had this change then, because that question was asked at that time, but the temperance reformers of that day would not listen to it. I am quite certain that on those two issues the whole country would have supported the Government, and it was because they were not put to the country in this way that we are now dealing with this, the most difficult subject with which we have ever had to deal. It is a subject which deeply stirs the heart with most passionate enthusiasm, and yet it is one that cannot be settled except by the most calm consideration. There are two sets of people concerned—one who would do away with all licensed houses if they could because they consider that they are wholly evil; and the other, to which I belong, who acknowledge in spite of all the evil that has taken place that the public-house is a good institution. I am rather of Mr. Johnson's opinion, that a public-house is a place where you can be quite sure they were glad to see you come and sorry to see you go away. But whether that be so or not, we must keep our heads and our hearts calm, and not allow our heads to be dominated too much by our hearts. We all, who work among the poor, know the awful evils of the drink traffic. But we must acknowledge that it is not merely for one class of people that this House legislates. We have to legislate for the mass of the people, and, as one who lives among them, as one who employs a good many of them, who has lived in close touch with them for many years, I venture to say that it is most unjust if you give the impression that they are an intemperate people. The greatest change which has occurred in my life time has been the spread of sobriety amongst the mass of working men. In my own part of the country, and in my own trade, drunkenness is quite the exception. I speak for thousands of people amongst whom I live, and whose lives I know quite well. When I get resolutions on this matter, speaking of the overwhelming temptations to drink, I say that they are not overwhelming. It is quite true that a great many people yield to them, but the causes are to be found—and here I sympathise with some of my Socialist friends—in the evils which cause that yielding to temptation. And the cure will have to be found for those evils. You want better housing, better feeding of children, and better lives. I ask myself, if whole classes have become temperate in my lifetime, why the causes which have effected that change cannot be made to operate in a similar manner on other classes. Whatever may be our own private view of this matter, whatever our own feelings about the traffic, public-houses will continue. No Government dare stand up in this House and say that they will do away with them. If it did, it would not live twenty-four hours. Therefore you have got to face the facts. The question is, how best can we deal with the problem? I think we can agree about three things in regard to public-houses. First, that there are too many of them; secondly, that a great many of them are too bad; thirdly—and I personally can agree—that the liquor is too bad and that we must have control of the public-houses. I want this Bill from its business side, because it deals with these three problems. The poorness of public-houses is caused partly by the fact that there are too many of them. If there were fewer they could afford to be better. Therefore, in my own neighbourhood I would do away, not with one-third but with one-half, not because I am opposed to public-houses, but because I want better public-houses. Cannot those who want better public-houses, and those friends who want no public-houses, seek a common ground of agreement, so that whatever public-houses remain may be good? I think that would be a fair ground to act upon, and one on which we might do something. As to the second point, about the liquor being too bad, perhaps the greatest change in the liquor trade for centuries has come from the tied-house system. I believe that this Bill is largely the consequence of that disastrous change. It is a change which has done more to deprive the public-house of its character and associations than any other change which has taken place in the last two centuries. You have sown the wind and you are reaping the whirlwind. I approve of the Bill of the Government because it gives us hope of dealing with that evil. The third point is that of getting control of the public-houses. The terms of that control I know will have to be discussed, but at any rate we can agree that we shall never have a right settlement until we have control of the public-houses. Whether we shall run them is a question I shall not discuss now; but we must get them into our hands, and we will never be able to deal with the evils of the tied-house system until we have done so. Therefore, I appeal to all those who are temperance advocates, and also those who are in favour of public-houses, to see whether we cannot agree upon this common ground, that we ought to reduce the number of public-houses, and that we ought to have ultimate control over them. These are the main points. All the others are merely leather and prunella. I wish the Bill had been confined to these points, because I believe then it would have been better received by the country. But it is the feelings, prejudices and passions which have been called into force by these small side issues which jeopardise the Bill, and are the real ground upon which we are threatened with all those dreadful electoral results mentioned by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wimbledon. I venture to offer the Government two suggestions which, in the spirit of the remarks I have made, may help the passing of the Bill. As to the reduction of the number of public-houses, at any rate we can agree upon this, that the people who are put out of their businesses ought to be treated fairly. The English nation is more than a fair, it is a sentimental nation, and if you violate its sense of generosity and fairness, which is one of the abiding features of the English people, catastrophe will follow. If once the public gets the idea that you are being mean with a great class of people, then farewell to any hopes of passing this Bill. However you may like or not like this trade, you must remember that it is a trade which has been called into being by the State. The State has specially given a licence for it; it gives it special countenance; therefore, the State is bound to deal with it, I do not say with special generosity, but at any rate according to the common principles of fairness such as commend themselves to the masses of the people. I am quite certain that if the Government could convince the people of England that those who are being put out of the trade are going to be treated fairly and even generously, the whole difficulty on that point would drop. I would ask the Home Secretary: Are you sure, in adhering to the principle of assessment, that you are working on the right lines? I do not think you are. The principle of assessment is utterly discredited in this matter. All the statistics which were given by my hon. and learned friend owe their power to the ridiculous assessments that have gone on for so long, and to public-houses having been absurdly under-assessed in the past. The consequence is that the principle and machinery of assessment are utterly discredited. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for St. George's, Hanover Square, said something about the Inland Revenue viewing these licences as things having a value in perpetuity.

MR. LYTTELTON: I said that Sir Algernon West, Chairman of the Board of Inland Revenue, instructed his collectors to value licences as if they were perpetual.

MR. HARWOOD: Those instructions with regard to licences are on no different lines from those applied to death duties and other things. If the valuer comes to value a picture, a Cooper for example, it does not fetch a fifth of what it did. The Inland Revenue takes it at what could be got for it, and it takes a licence at what it would fetch now. They have a perfect right to claim duty on the value of the thing now. But to say that because there is renewal of a licence, therefore it is a licence in perpetuity has no ground in common sense. Would it not be possible for the House to institute some form of valuing these businesses which are to be done away with, so that the country would feel quite sure that a perfectly independent organisation will value them on the principle on which every other business is valued? If the Legislature chooses to do away with some public-houses I do not see why they should not be treated in the same way as other businesses. The public do not believe that assessment is a good plan, because the assessments have been ridiculous. The Government say: "We will not take advantage of the ridiculous assessments that you have had so far, but we will give you a year to put them right." But a scramble of that sort before the authorities who have already started those ridiculous assessments will not satisfy the public. They must be made to know that there will be some means by which these businesses, quite apart from all other traditions, will be assessed on the same principle as is applied to any other business. That is the first suggestion I wish to offer to the Government. As to the fourteen years limit, I do not think I need go into the arguments which have been used. I remember very well, as a boy, going into this matter. A man had got a licence for some premises near my father's business, and he called in the afternoon to see my father, to whom he said: "You have put

£2,000 into my pocket." I said to my father: "Why into his pocket?" and I have been asking that question ever since. Thirty years ago I tried to start a movement among the Liberal Party in my own neighbourhood to get this value. There is no need to talk sentiment and temperance about it. The thing is business. Here is a lot of money we ought to have. In a strict business point of view we have a perfect right to say to these people: "At the end of the year we shall make you pay what you ought to have paid all along. You have got a licence which has a money value, and this nonsense has gone too far. Thank your stars that you have had a good pull out of it, but we are going to put an end to it. The nation has wakened up, it has got its senses, and it is going to have its own." That would be perfectly right. Supposing I have a licence worth £200 a year, from which I pay nothing except the ordinary licence duty, I am collecting £200 profit every year, and it is money which ought to be handed over to the nation. You give me fourteen years, that is £2,800. I have to pay compensation out of that. I am only being treated fairly, because not only am I getting the State's money, but I am getting the extra business through the other monopoly being done away with. It is quite plain. As a Member who has sat here some years I say let us be businesslike and introduce as little sentiment as possible. I quite enjoyed the Chancellor of the Exchequer's speech. C'est magnifique mais ce n'est pas la guerre. I think the country wants to be businesslike. The second point is the last one I want to bring before the Government. May I beg of you to drop Sub-section 2 of Clause 2. That is the sub-section that provides that simply without anything further being said or done, at the end of the fourteen years period we shall come under the possibility of local option to the extent of prohibition. I am not going to discuss the question of pro-prohibition, but I am going to say to the Government that this clause is both unfair and unwise. It is unfair because it is inconsistent with all the claims that the Prime Minister has made on behalf of his Bill. He has said all through; "We put before you a Bill which will give you a free hand at the end of fourteen years. There will be"—I think he used the phrase—"a *tabula rasa*, and then the nation will be able to do what it likes." I ask that we shall have a *tabula rasa*, without "local veto" or anything else written across it. Let me say to the Home Secretary, if you are going to prejudge anything, if you are going to pre-condition this problem in anything, you will have to put other things in besides this. There are many on this side of the House who, if this sort of thing is going on, will be inclined to insist that there shall be some kind of security for the public-house keepers who survive the fourteen years. I am very strongly of opinion that one of the greatest means to temperance is not merely to diminish the number of public houses, and not merely to improve the quality of public-houses, but to improve the quality of public-house keepers. My experience is that very much depends on the character and conduct of the publican himself. Therefore, it is a national interest that we shall attract to this trade, as long as it is going to continue, good men, men prepared to put a stake in it, men of substance and respectability, and therefore, I for one say that if you insist on keeping this clause I shall insist on other clauses, and I shall insist on some clause which will give some security to the publicans who survive the storm and stress of the fourteen years, that they shall have at any rate a certain time of security. But we are prepared to waive all that—I am speaking I know for others besides myself—on the broad principle that there shall be a complete *tabula rasa*. If you put in local veto to the extent of prohibition, you are prejudging the question in a most unfair manner. It is not only unfair but unwise. I should have thought the Prime Minister would say: "Once bit, twice shy,"—at any rate I should have thought "once bit, once shy." I hope he does not listen too much to the syren voice of the hon. Member for Appleby. In the political history of this question—and I have been taking part in it for more years than I like to think of—the chief disaster has come not from the publicans, but from the extravagance and impossibility of those who call themselves temperance reformers. I am not afraid to stand up for that. I remember very well the present Prime Minister's name along with that of Sir William Harcourt being associated with a Bill bringing in this principle. I tell you I do not think the country know that this is in the Bill. I am very much surprised that, as we schoolboys used to say, the Opposition has not rubbed it in. This is one of the best bits of business they could have had, because you have no idea of the storm of passion that will arise. I do not speak of the Welshman; I do not understand him. I do not speak of the Scotsman; he rules me, and I do not understand him. When I look at the Government I know it is a Scottish Government, and they ought to wear the kilt. They are either Scottish or sit for Scottish constituencies, and the numbers of refugees in that direction seems likely to increase. I am not a Celt and I do not pretend to speak for Wales or Scotland or Ireland, but I can peak for England.

AN HON. MEMBER: Some of it.

MR. HARWOOD: A good deal of it. I think I speak for as much of it as will rule the rest when I say that Englishmen have a rooted prejudice and conviction that every man shall be able to get a glass of beer, if he wants it with reasonable conditions. That is all. Therefore they will not allow any majority however great, to say to any minority however small, "you shall not be able to get this thing." I feel strongly on this matter, and I want this Bill to go through, or a Bill to deal with this evil. I believe this is really a business Bill. I believe it has been misrepresented in the country by all these little side issues that have nothing to do with the principal substance of it, and I urge the Government to do everything they can to make its passage as easy as possible.

MR. RUFUS ISAACS (Reading): I approach the discussion on the Second Reading of this Bill after much thought and very anxious consideration. I am not a member of any temperance party. My views are those of a moderate, average person anxious to consider this Bill upon its merits, and actuated by a desire for temperance reform, but not lagging behind hon. Members on the other side in the wish to deal justly with those whose interests may be affected by the Bill. I am convinced nothing is further from the thoughts of the Government than to deal harshly, unjustly, tyrannically, oppressively or vindictively with those interests. In the short time I intend to occupy in my address to the House, I desire to direct its attention to the main points of debate, and I propose to lay the arguments before the House with such moderation as I think the subject demands, having regard to the important interests involved in the legislative proposals now before us. It has been said by lawyers on both sides of the House, and not with the least emphasis by my right hon. friends the Members for St. George's, Hanover Square, and the Kingston Division of Surrey that there is no doubt as to the law upon this subject. The general proposition of law, on which I am not going to say more than is necessary to formulate it merely for the sake of clearness, is that there was no right in law to the renewal of a licence before the Act of 1904, and under the law as it then stood, as was stated by a great authority, Lord Halsbury, a renewal is merely a new licence for a new year. With that definition upon that very eminent authority one may rest content, but I shall have to refer to it again, because although the right hon. Gentleman the Member for St. George's, Hanover Square, agreed in that statement of the law I think I am justified in the observation which I will seek to make good, that the whole of his argument, all the propositions which he put forward in contravention of those for which we are arguing on this side, were based upon the notion that there is a property in that renewal. It is idle to assent to this proposition and then to say that there is a property in the licence. The right hon. Gentleman in support of his argument and in the attack he made upon the proposed scheme of compensation asserted that if in dealing with a house entitled under that scheme to £1,000 a year for fourteen years we only allowed £10,500, we were giving nothing for the capital—that is the licence—we were leaving that out of calculation. And then he instanced the case of a man who owned land worth £10,000, and producing £1,000 a year, then you capitalise the yearly income for fourteen years by paying him £10,500 at present, and at the end of the time he would still have the land. Yes, but that is based upon this misconception of the whole position—that your right to the renewal of the licence is a freehold. Does the right hon. Gentleman assert that it is? Then if it is not asserted the whole argument falls. As we understood during the debate on the Bill of 1904 when the present Leader of the Opposition was discussing this matter he refused in one sense to recognise a licence as property. He refused to recognise it in any sense as a freehold, although he ultimately created greater rights than licence-holders had ever hitherto possessed. If there is nothing in the nature of property in a licence other than is represented by the value of an expectancy containing elements of speculation as to whether the licence will be renewed for this year, the next year, or the succeeding years, how can my right hon. friend claim payment from capital which has already been bought by the fourteen years compensation? When the Leader of the Opposition introduced his Bill of 1904, what was his position? His statements and contentions are not only an answer to a part of the argument used by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for St. George's, Hanover Square, but also meet one of the fundamental arguments urged by the other side. It is said that what we are seeking is to confiscate property. The word was used by the noble Lord the Member for Marylebone, after he had made excuses for those who outside this House indulged in language of that kind. The noble Lord himself used words of the same character and spoke as if property was being taken away to which there was a legal right. Nothing can be more clearly demonstrated than the fact that when the Bill of 1904 was introduced by the Leader of the Opposition he made it perfectly clear that the system under which the licences had been granted was utterly irrational, and he pointed out that he was recognising no such thing as a legal right to the renewal of a licence. Hon. Gentlemen opposite, and right hon. Gentlemen sitting on the front Opposition Bench, seem entirely to leave out of consideration that the Act of 1904 did two things. First it provided for a scheme of compensation. "Yes," it may be said, "because you were taking away property." I am aware that if you take land you must pay for it. That is quite true, but what is forgotten is that the person whose land is taken away, is compensated by the State or public authority or company acquiring the land out of its own funds, but by the Act of 1904, the compensation is paid by the trade itself, and if we on this side are confiscators and spoliators what is to be said of the supporters of the Act of 1904? What the Leader of the Opposition did was to say to the trade "You shall give up your licences and give up the interest which you say you have in them." I would remind the right hon. Gentleman opposite that the Leader of the Opposition went even further than our proposals, because he said, "Before you get that compensation, before I provide the right to pay yourselves for the reduction of your property, you must bring in the ante-1869 beer-houses to the number of 23,000 and throw them into the same category and place them on the same basis as other licences." Hon. Members are quite aware what the difference was in regard to those licences, and what a privileged preferential position they occupied. Those licences were the apple of the eye of the men who had them because their renewal could not be refused except on certain specified grounds and it was because these beer-houses had that valuable privilege that they were differentiated from other licenses in respect of which renewal could be refused without any grounds of misconduct. We must remember this distinction when we are accused of spoliation, confiscation, and hear all the other harsh things which are said oftener outside the House than within. Let us remind the trade of what took place in 1904. That Act is really the best argument that we have for the Bill we are now proposing. Of course I do not expect hon. Gentleman opposite to agree with me, but I shall give my reasons. What actually happened in 1904? It is argued now not very confidently by the right hon. Gentleman opposite that the reduction of licences is not a step in the path of temperance.

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*MR. LYTTELTON: I said no such thing.

*MR. RUFUS ISAACS: I will not pursue the point if the right hon. Gentleman says I misunderstood him. The Leader of the Opposition put forward the Bill of 1904 because he said that a reduction of licences would make for temperance. Lord Lansdowne, in the House of Lords, said the same thing, and I have a quotation from his Lordship's speech here, but I will not trouble the House with it. I think when we hear from hon. Members opposite the argument that a reduction of licences is not a step in the direction of temperance we are entitled to ask them why was the Act of 1904 introduced? What we have to show now is why we are introducing this Bill. Under the present Act there is no uniform system of reduction nor a compulsory levying of the maximum. It depends entirely upon the will of the authorities as to how much will be spent in a particular year. In the next place by the decision of Mr. Justice Kennedy progress is most seriously retarded inasmuch as the compensation to be paid is an effective obstacle to the reduction of any number of houses during succeeding years. What the Government say in this Bill is "We will introduce compulsory reduction over a period of years, and we will have a system of compensation which we think is fair and equitable." That is the real point, and to me the question in controversy always narrows itself to this—is the proposed compensation a fair and equitable compensation? Presumably there would be no controversy, no dispute in regard to the proposition that provided you give sufficient and adequate compensation, you should be entitled to reduce the number of licences. The only question which arises is, what is a fair and equitable basis of compensation. I agree it is a difficult subject, and it is one which cannot be decided by a dictum of any Member of the Government, and it cannot be disposed of in a few words. It is a matter which we shall have to discuss very much in Committee. Speaking for myself, and not omitting from consideration the figures presented to the House by the hon. Member for Spen Valley and others, I may say that I am not satisfied that the period of fourteen years is a fair and just compensation. I am rather inclined to the view that a time-limit of fourteen years will not prove sufficient. The hon. Member for Spen Valley quoted the instance of eighty-two companies with a share and debenture capital amounting to £74,912,000, all of which came into his third category of bad companies, some with very small reserves and others with no reserve at all. That seems to me to be an argument in favour of extending the time of compensation, because the situation created by this Bill would thus be eased to those who may not be in the position to make the necessary financial arrangements within the period limited. It might also enable those affected to face the situation without any risk of financial crisis I only put that forward as my own view as the result of the consideration which I have been able to give to the matter, and because I am very anxious that this House should deal rather liberally and even generously with the interests affected by the Bill. If by this course the passage of the Bill here and elsewhere can be secured, we shall not have done a bad day's work for temperance even if we have to give more than some hon. Members think strictly necessary. The hon. Member for Blackburn says that if you extend the time-limit you will take the heart out of the measure. I do not believe the heart is so weak that by extending the time-limit 50 per cent. you will make it cease to beat. However, this is a point we shall have to consider in Committee. I fully recognise that we are dealing with the Second Reading and not the Committee stage. In reference to compensation the great question is how you are to arrive at an equitable basis of calculation. The right hon. Gentleman opposite seemed rather puzzled as to how the hon. Member for Spen Valley got at his figure of £1,050. That is arrived at in this way. Suppose you take premises which would make the difference calculated under the Act £100 a year. You have to take them subject to compensation for fourteen years under the present time-limit. Now that would give at 4 per cent. £1,829, if you take it for the fourteen years adding interest as paid year by year. If you pay the compensation at once you arrive at £1,050, the figure given by the hon. Member for Spen Valley, which is really ten and a half years purchase at £100 a year. That is the fourteen years time-limit calculated at £100 a year, but paid at once instead of over a period of fourteen years. That is the explanation of the figure at which the hon. Member for Spen Valley arrived. Much has been said about the system of calculating compensation upon the assessment of the licensed house. There is a letter this morning in an organ not favourable to the views we are putting forward on this side of the House—I mean the *Standard*. It is written by Messrs. Orgill & Marks, a firm of valuers who occupy a high position. In that letter they deal only with the figures for London under the quinquennial valuation of the London County Council, because no other figures were at hand and they controverted very strongly the view put forward by the hon. Member for Spen Valley that the houses were rated at a ridiculously and even a dishonestly low figure. They tell us that is not the case. I am dealing with the London figures which are the figures they give. They say that during the last ten years the assessment of public houses in London has increased by 55 per cent., and further they tell us that licensed premises are now according to this calculation assessed at three times the value of the premises unlicensed. At the annual rateable value it works out that 6,868 houses produce an average annual rateable value of £217 for a licensed house. Taking these premises unlicensed and according to Schedule A, the value would be £72, and, therefore, the compensation would be calculated at an annual rate of £145, which at ten and a half years purchase would give an average of £1,522 per house. One would have thought that this amount would represent very fair compensation for houses assessed as licensed premises at £217. May I remind the House also of what seems to have been forgotten in the discussion on the comparison of the compensation paid under the Act of 1904, and that proposed to be paid under this Bill? Under the Act of 1904 there is only one compensation amount, and from that the publicans share has to be carved out. We have been discusssing in the debate the compensation to be paid to the owner; there is a separate provision in the Bill for compensation to be paid over and above that, to the publican. We have to bear this in mind when comparing the compensation payable under the Bill with the compensation under the Act of 1914. If the figures given by the eminent firm of valuers to whom I have referred be correct, and if we take that assessment as the true average assessment for the country, it would appear that the owners of licensed premises, if dealt with under the scale of this Bill, would really not have very much to complain of. It may be true—and I have no doubt it is true, for I could give instances—that there are a number of houses in which the assessments are ridiculously low, whatever the true reason may be, and, however we may have arrived at the result, the fact is that in these houses these persons have been enjoying for a considerable period low assessments, and one would have thought that there was not very much ground for complaint when we remember that under this very Bill the Government gives the opportunity of putting the assessment right, so that if conscience pricks them when they consider the payment of compensation, and if they are desirous of being assessed at the higher rate, their wish can be gratified through the thoughtfulness of the Government. I have dealt with the two main points, namely, the first, as to the property in a licence; and the second, as to the compensation. The only other point of substance on which I desire to say a few words is the monopoly value. Much has been said in criticism of that phrase. I would remind hon. Members on the opposite side of the House that we are not the inventors of it. The originators of it were to be found on the Treasury Bench as it was in 1904. They coined the phrase "monopoly value," and they defined to some extent what it meant. We were told, I think by the Prime Minister, that we shall have to define what it means. I hope he will. For myself I am anxious that it should be made clear, and I do not know whether I have quite apprehended what is intended by the Bill in stipulating for the payment of the monopoly value. As I follow it, what it means is not the taking over by compensation or in any other way the goodwill. What is intended is to charge the person receiving a licence something like its value—

something more adequately approaching the value of the privilege which is to be given to him by the authorities. I understand that to be something in the nature of rent which he will have to pay for the privilege granted to him. In a case where a public-house is producing a profit of £1,000 a year, the authorities will not take the whole or anything like the whole of that amount. They will say that, having regard to the scale on which they assess the privilege of selling liquor in the district, such a house should pay, say, £150 or £200 annually for this privilege. That is altogether apart from goodwill. It has no more to do with goodwill than my action would have in a case where, if I were the owner of premises in which a tenant was carrying on business, I raised the rent from £50 to £200. That tenant would have as good a right to say that I was confiscating his goodwill as the man who, having been granted a licence, is asked to pay for the exclusive privilege of selling drink in a particular house. If I may add a word on clubs, it will certainly only be a word after the way in which the subject has been dealt with by the hon. Member for Haggerston. I would like to say for myself that I am glad he made his speech and gave the figures which he submitted to the House. It has been a revelation to me to hear that so many workmen's clubs are nothing less than drinking clubs. I have never understood that was the case. I know some in my own constituency. I do not think that they partake of that character. It is true that they are Liberal clubs. I do not say that the description applies more to Conservative clubs than to Liberal clubs. It seems to me that these clubs are of value and benefit. It is perfectly true that men go to such clubs, and I maintain that they are better employed in doing so than in going from one public-house to another. I ask the House to consider the licensing question in a spirit of fairness and justice to those who are advocating the views contained in and underlying this Bill, and to give us credit for the desire to be fair and just to the trade. We do not intend that they should get any special favouritism shown to them, but we do intend that this proposed legislation should deal equitably with them. We resent most strongly the notion that the Bill is intended to avenge the party in some way upon the trade, or to wrest from the trade something which Parliament has no right to take. No one can accuse the Government of introducing the Bill with a desire to catch votes; and no one can accuse them of intending in the slightest degree to flinch from the attitude they have taken up.

*MR. BELLOC (Salford, S.): In regard to the discussions which have taken place on the proposals of the Government, I believe there is an overwhelming public opinion in opposition to them. It is not always easy for a man, who believes that the public opinion of the day is against it, to take action which he knows to be right; but I think in the present circumstances I am entitled to ignore that public opinion and support the Second Reading of the Bill. I do so because, as the Prime Minister said and as public opinion has not yet appreciated, the measure means a clear struggle between the Government and the people in general and one trade alone. That alone should induce a man, animated in any way by democratic principles, to support the Second Reading. The noble Lord the Member for Marylebone suggested that the extraordinary outburst of energy and alarm immediately after the introduction of the Bill was due to the fact that the trade found itself suddenly and unexpectedly attacked. If that were so, they would not have had within twelve hours after the introduction of the Bill such a display of printed matter against it, nor throughout England such an outburst of scurrility attacking every Liberal Member and threatening if they voted for the Second Reading. That indeed is one of the greatest reasons why men who respect representative government should vote for the Second Reading. I myself went down to my constituency and summoned the licence holders to a meeting. They came in large numbers. Many of them, as I heartily believe, had voted for and supported me in the last election, and a great majority, I say it to their honour were ready to meet me with arguments as to amendments, and put before me reasonable views. But there was present at that meeting an element of threat which I have not often heard in the course of my life, but which when I have heard makes my decision to resist it only the stronger. From that moment, strong as the criticisms are that may justly be made against the Bill, I said that the Second Reading of it deserved the support of every Radical worthy of the name in this House. Another reason why the Second Reading of the Bill should be supported is that, for the first time, at any rate in our industrial generation, we are beginning to tackle one of the great monopolies. In the near future we shall be compelled to do that in one province after another. The man who does not see that sees nothing of the industrial development of our time. If we flinch now before threats of one monopoly alone, then good-bye to all economic and social reform, and this House must cease to be not only the representatives, but the guardians of anything which is well worth securing, and of its own honour. That, I think, is a very cogent second reason for supporting the Second Reading of the Bill. There are, nevertheless, certain criticisms which suggest themselves to one who desires thoroughly to represent his constituents. I speak for a constituency in which democratic feeling is strong and in which the ordinary English artisan, skilled and unskilled, forms the great bulk of the electorate. In the first place, surely too much power is given to the magistracy and too little to the popular voice, and especially in the last clause of the Bill which, I venture to think, may not be fully discussed under the fall of the guillotine. In the second place, no power is given to the people of a locality to augment as well as to diminish the number of licences. To the vast majority of those listening to me that may seem to be merely a doctrinaire point; but there are areas in England where the fanaticism of the great landed proprietor, or more often of his wife, forbids the people to have that common meeting place, that village club, which a well-conducted public-house is, and for such places it would be of democratic value to give to the inhabitants the right to say not only that they would have less or no public-houses, but that they would have one or more. Another point is that the Bill does not provide sufficiently for compensation to the tenant or manager and the employees. Amendments in that direction will certainly be moved from these benches, and it will be difficult for hon. Gentlemen opposite not to support them. You are going to throw a considerable number of men out of employment, and you are bound to see that those who are losing their livelihood by the extinction of licences are compensated. Finally, the Bill does not adequately deal with the question of tied houses. I do not pretend to say at the moment how Amendments in that direction are to be framed, but it is true that if you could attack that evil, and get rid of the tied houses, you would be doing much more real practical work than by waiting fourteen years before tackling it. That is the main evil, so far as general opinion testifies. If the tied-house system had not arisen, and if the independent public-house had continued to exist, three-fourths of the difficulty would not have arisen. There is hardly one evil in connection with the licensed trade which is not closely associated with and has always been augmented by the tied-house system, the effect of which has been to throw a great monopoly into the hands of the wealthy brewing companies. The tied houses represent in extra profit to the monopoly a sum of at least £20,000,000 a year, and £20,000,000 a year means a sum sufficient to defray a universal, non-contributory old-age pension scheme. The tied-house system must be attacked not at the end of fourteen years but at once. If that were done, not only would you have at your back the common sympathy of those who have gone into the details of temperance reform, but the general opinion of the nation. My firm belief is that if those who are most loudly crying out against any change in the present system knew that the Government were going to abolish the tied-house system, they would come forward and support the Bill. I suggest that one of the best ways to meet the case would be to put such words into the Bill as to cause the free houses to be treated with preference against the tied houses.

*Mr. BRIDGEMAN (Shropshire, Oswestry): The hon. and learned Member for Reading took a great many legal points in his speech in support of the Bill. We have heard of legal points from other hon. Members opposite, but I do not think that we have heard many speeches with the view of ascertaining whether this Bill, from the point of view of the ordinary citizen, will do any good or harm. Hon. Members opposite have paid tributes to their own courage in sticking to the Bill. I must say that I do admire their courage for that, in the same way as I admire the courage of an Anarchist who goes about with a bomb which may at any time explode and kill himself as well as his intended victim. But the Anarchist does not mind in the least how many absolutely innocent people are killed or wounded in his attempt, and I think hon. Gentlemen opposite are like the Anarchist in this way; they profess that they are going to attain a great boon to humanity if they succeed in their attempt, but they never think of the injury they may do to innocent persons. The Chancellor of the Exchequer to-day made great fun of the position of widows and orphans after this Bill had been passed into law, but not a single person, in the course of this debate, so far as I am able to gather, has attempted to show that this Bill does not affect a very large number of innocent and harmless people. I really have only heard one excuse and one argument advanced by right hon. and hon. Members in defence of this wanton mischief that they propose to do, and that is that the widows and the orphans ought not to have been so foolish as to invest their money in brewery or in trading concerns, that they were the dupes of the brewer and those people who floated their businesses into companies, and that because they were so simple and were taken in therefore they were proper victims for attack by any Government. I do not know, however, how far hon. Members are going to carry the principle that a man who has made a bad investment should have what little is left him of his investment taken away. At all events, I should have thought that it was possible for such a great and wise Government as the present to have devised a measure for reforming drunkards without starving the widows and the orphans. I know that it is an unpleasant subject for some people because they are put in a great dilemma, as very often on a public platform they make attacks upon brewers which are received with great cheering, and for which they get great support; they say they are going to clip the wings of a trade which has made too much and that it is fair to take something from them. But if the trade and the brewers have managed to throw their shares upon widows and orphans how are they going to be harmed by this Bill? What hon. Members want to do apparently, therefore, is to punish people who have made a bad investment, because they are not getting 5 per cent., and to punish those in the trade who are getting more than 5 per cent. Are you going to stand as arbiters and punish everyone unless they make exactly what you think the right profit out of their businesses? What is the object of this Bill? First of all, to get the monopoly value, because that is supposed to be a great thing for the revenue and that it will bring in a great deal of money. I very much doubt if it will. In the second place it is said that the reduction of licences will promote temperance in this country. What I cannot understand, however, is how it is that when the Bill of 1904 was debated in this House those who opposed it said it was a retrograde movement, and that although that Bill which had for its object the reduction of licences, was of that character, this measure which has the same object, though perhaps it does it much more quickly, is a great and courageous measure of temperance reform. Why is it that of two Bills not different on this particular point, one will do an injustice to the temperance cause, while the other will promote it? But will this Bill promote temperance? The particular arguments inducing hon. Members to think that a reduction of the number of licences will promote temperance are, first, that it makes supervision more easy because there are fewer houses to be supervised, and, secondly, that if the competition is reduced there will not be so much temptation to those who run the houses to push the trade too far. With regard to the supervision of the police, I think that is a fairly good argument; but then side by side with this proposal for the reduction of licences you are going to allow drinking to go on, and to an increased extent, in places where the police will not be able to supervise, and therefore hon. Members are not entitled to use that argument, as they will do as much harm in the one direction as they will good in another. Then as to the competition. If it is a fact that competition causes license-holders not to push their trade, and make people drink in order to make a profit, surely the same result will be produced if you are going to add to the taxation which the trade already bears. It will in that case be more difficult for them to make their profit, and therefore the difficulties and dangers of competition will be increased by your measure. I was never one of those people who thought that the mere reduction in the number of licences was in itself capable of doing much good to temperance, certainly not in a great many places. I think it was the Chief Secretary for Ireland who made a speech the other day in which he said it brought tears to his eyes to pass a gin palace in a slum district. And by the way, I suppose he occasionally passes a gin palace in Dublin, and some other Irish cities he visits, and why does it not bring tears to his eyes and make him wish to put Ireland in this Bill? But what brings tears to his eyes in passing a gin palace is not that there are three gin palaces where there ought to be two, but because one of those houses is not properly conducted, and these are the places which should be shut up, not because they are redundant, but because they are not properly conducted. In my opinion, what might be done in the direction of temperance reform in this way is to close public-houses which are not properly conducted, very much more frequently than is done now. If the law as it exists were used as it should be used, I think you would do far more good than you will by reducing the numbers simply because there are so many. I cannot believe that it is impossible even under the present law to bring about an immense boon to the cause of temperance by closer and more vigilant police supervision, and I think something might be done by legislation perhaps, or at any rate, by administration, in the way to punishing more severely the people who get drunk or by treating habitual drunkards in a more scientific way than they are treated now. But I confess that I am not a great believer in legislation for the temperance cause. I believe that temperance has progressed very considerably in the last few years, and that it is progressing very steadily now, but to my mind, the great forces that you want to call forth in order to make the advance still more rapid are not forces of devastation, but forces of education and religion in our schools, joined with the teaching of thrift and responsibility of parents. This Government, I think, has not done their duty in that respect. They have made an attack upon the religious teaching in the schools. We understand that they propose to introduce a measure of old age pensions of a non-contributory character, which does not seem to me to encourage thrift. We all know that a year or two ago they passed a measure which enabled men to have their children fed out of the rates—men who had chosen to drink away the money which they ought to have spent in feeding their children. [Cries of "No."] Under the Provision of Meals Bill the parents who do not supply their children with food are able to get them fed out of the rates. [Cries of "No," and "What about the provision for negligent parents?"]

*Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER (Mr. Emmott, Oldham): Order, order. I think the hon. Member had better confine himself to the Bill.

*Mr. BRIDGEMAN: My point was this, that if the Government had turned their hands to thrift instead of discouraging it they would have done more in the direction of promoting temperance than they have done. There are, it seems to me, only two courses open, either for the State to take over the whole of the drink traffic themselves or to put it into the hands of the municipalities or else to allow the present system to go on with supervision, but with supervision of a friendly and not of a hostile character. Under this Bill supervision is of a most hostile character, and hostile to the best people in the trade rather than the worst, and it seems to me to have this very bad effect, that it must discourage all responsible men from entering into the trade. What you should do is to encourage men who are respectable and responsible to conduct the trade, and then it will be conducted in a way which will prevent, or at any rate, reduce very much the intemperance which, of course, we all know exists in certain instances. What I ask myself and hon. Gentlemen opposite is this—Who is going to be any better for this Bill? Not the brewer. ["Hear, hear."] That is its great attraction, I know. Not the shareholder in any business connected with the trade, not the drunkard—there is nothing in this Bill to make the drunkard sober—not the sober person. As far as I can see, the only people who will be benefited by this Bill are those who gave vague pledges that they would support a temperance measure, and they are prepared to redeem those pledges by supporting any measure which can be described as a temperance measure, although not a single drunken man will be made sober by it, and a great deal of harm will be done to a great number of people who are perfectly sober.

*Mr. ARTHUR HENDERSON (Durham, Barnard Castle): The Member for Oswestry who has just addressed the House has submitted one or two questions to the supporters of this Bill. He asked how it was that many of us opposed the Act of 1904, with its reduction proposals, and described it as a retrograde measure, and yet are whole-heartedly in support of this measure, when the only difference is that the rate of reduction may be more speedy. I am prepared as one who sat very closely through the debates on the 1904 Bill to answer his question. We did consider it a retrograde measure though we recognised that it might be an instrument for reducing licences, but we were never convinced that it could reduce licences at a greater rate than the magistrates had been reducing them. I say at a greater rate. But I venture to say that if some of the figures are compared with those of the last three years, the rate is not much greater. One of the points on which we took the greatest exception to the Bill of 1904 was that it destroyed to a considerable extent the powers that had been vested in the licensing bench, in the interest of the public, for centuries. And this at a time when the magistrates had been roused by the majority Report of the Royal Commission to a recognition of the fact that they had a duty to perform in the interests of the community; when they had become alive to this duty, then the Bill of 1904 was brought in without any authority from the country. I wish to emphasise this point which I do not think has been emphasised sufficiently in this debate. We cannot forget that the Government which passed that measure came into power because they appealed to Liberals to forget their Liberalism and to Labour men to lay aside their principles in order that the Government might be allowed to complete the work they had in hand in South Africa. They were returned to power, and instead of coming again to the country when they had completed their work, they proceeded to commit what I can only describe as an unauthorised wrong on the country, by the passing of the Act of 1904. Hence, I think, we are fully justified in saying that it was a retrograde measure and in opposing its passage through this House. When the subsequent election came, our constituents were invited to return us to this House in order to do what we could to reverse the principles of that measure. Now, one observation on the speech to which we listened with considerable satisfaction from the hon. Member for Reading. It was in keeping with his high legal position, but notwithstanding the eloquence of that speech, many of us were much alarmed to find it marred by what I will venture to describe as a very great blot. I say, and I think I also speak for the majority of those who sit upon these benches, that we heard with considerable amazement the suggestion that we, as a community, should be more generous still and extend the time-limit of the Bill. When I listened to the statements he made so effectively on the legal aspect of the case I began to think that he had made out a case for, instead of the fourteen years time-limit, something considerably less. But when he appealed to his colleagues and especially to those on the Treasury Bench, and desired them to take into consideration the question of extending the limit. I thought the Government on that particular point must have wished to have been saved from their friend. Then I listened, as many others did also, to what I will venture to describe as a most amusing speech from one of the hon. Members for Bolton (Mr. Harwood). It was some time before I could find out in which direction he was going and what he proposed to do with his vote. He is the only Member who has made any attempt to minimise the evils of intemperance. I am pleased to recognise that almost every speaker on both sides has admitted that the finding of the Royal Commission was not far from the mark when they said there was a gigantic evil to be remedied, and that almost any sacrifice would not be too great to obtain that end. The part that most interested me in the speech of the hon. Gentleman was when he appealed to the Government to do away with the democratic nature of this Bill and to take out the local veto provision. I was always given to understand that the principle of Liberalism was trust in the people, and I cannot but describe the hon. Gentleman's appeal to the Government as being of the most cowardly character. It is a strong word, but I think I am justified in using it, for this reason. He tried to carry the mind of the Secretary of State for the Home Department back to those days when the late Sir William Harcourt was in charge of a measure in this House, a measure having for its object the setting up of a veto in connection with the issuing of licences; his suggestion was that the Liberals suffered for having identified themselves with the principle, and that having been once bitten they should be twice shy. I hope on this occasion, even if the voice of the charmer is that of a Liberal the Government will be deaf to any such suggestion. If they want to take away much of the enthusiasm and determination which is behind this measure in the country as well as in this House, they cannot do so more effectually than by responding to his appeal, and taking from the Bill the provision which gives the veto to the locality. He said, and I challenge his statement most emphatically, that the working classes were opposed to the principle of the veto; that the working-man liked to get his beer just when he wanted to. Yes, but that was not an accurate statement of the position. The working-men in thousands of cases in this country cannot please himself to-day. Why? Not because like the people in Canada, and in a great portion of the United States, he has been consulted in the matter, but for the simple reason that the ground landlord, knowing that the presence of a public-house on his estate deteriorates the property, has vetoed licences. There are many estates on which there is not a single licensed house. I challenge the hon. Member further on this point. I say that this principle has had the approval of large numbers of working men in this country. There are scores if not hundreds of hon. Members of this House to-day who have stood for this principle and who, if they did not vote for it in the old Parliament, at the last general election pledged themselves in working class constituencies to vote for it whenever they had an opportunity to do so. So far as the Labour Party are concerned, there need be no misunderstanding as to where we are on this question. When it was referred to our Annual Conference two years ago a Resolution was put forward which I may be permitted to read—

> "It being admitted by Judges, magistrates, chief constables, Poor Law administrators, governors of gaols, governors of lunaticasylums, ministers of religion of all denominations, and social workers generally, that the drink traffic is a fruitful source of poverty, crime and lunacy, this Conference is of opinion that the time has arrived when the workers of the nation should demand that a law be enacted giving the inhabitants of every locality the right to veto any application for either the renewal of existing licences or the granting of new ones, seeing that public-houses are generally situated in thickly populated working-class districts."

There was a discussion on that, and a vote taken, and I should like, Mr. Speaker, to give the result of the figures—"For the resolution,' 666,000; against, 103,000." At the Conference in the following year this question came up again in a slightly different form, and the following Resolution was unanimously adopted—

> "That any measure of temperance reform should confer on the localities full and unfettered power for dealing with the licensing question in accordance with local opinion. By

this means localities should be enabled to (*a*) prohibit the sale of liquor within their boundaries; (*b*) reduce the number of licences and regulate the conditions under which they may be held; and (*c*) if a locality desires that licences are to be granted, to determine whether such licences shall be under private or any form of public control."

So far as the representatives of the Labour Party are concerned, their position with regard to this provision is perfectly plain and straightforward. There is a strong force of organised labour in this country who are very largely giving their support to this Bill, not merely on any temperance lines, but because, in the first place, it provides us with the means of regaining that which we ought never to have lost—the power and control over existing licences. The hon. Member for Salford I think was mistaken when he said that there was no power in the Bill to augment the number of licences. Provided there is any locality where the number of licences does not reach the number in the schedule, and an application is made for a new licence, the power of the vote could decide in favour of that new licence. Unless that is the Bill, I am very much mistaken. If they do not reach the schedule limit, I think I am right in saying the people could decide as to whether the existing number should be increased. There was another point upon which I feel it is absolutely necessary for me to say a few words. One of the objections that has been made by those who have spoken against the Bill is the influence its operation is going to exercise in the direction of the displacement of labour. That point has not only been made in this House. There has been a strenuous endeavour to make it on hundreds of platforms in the country. It is a point in which we are very much interested. I think hon. Members will admit our anxiety in connection with the great unemployed problem. We recognise that it is bad enough to-day, without having it increased unnecessarily by any Bill; and are we delighted to find such sympathy from quarters where we do not always get it, regarding this feature in our social life. I notice that the trade have made very great efforts to find figures of the actual situation that will be created by the operation of the Bill. First of all, we were told that the number employed by the trade was 1,000,000; then it rose to 1,500,000; and now I believe it is somewhere near 2,000,000. Where are we going to end? Are these figures correct? I challenge them. I say that they are very far from being correct. If we take even those who have written in connection with this question not in the interests of temperance, but in the interests of the trade—Mr. Pratt, who has written a book in defence of the licensed trade—the estimate of the number employed in and about breweries is about 70,000, and the number employed in public-houses is 485,968, or a total of 556,000. What do we find? We find that there has been a great change taking place in the occupations connected with the trade by the transfer system that has been going on. I have here the figures for Birmingham. I am surprised, and, having analysed them, I venture to say that more men have been displaced as the result of the transfer system in the Birmingham district than will be displaced by the operation of this Bill. I wonder how it is we cannot get this appeal for compensation and for consideration for displaced labour when it is displaced by other forms of monopoly. I was going through some of the Government Returns not so very long ago, and I was surprised to find that in the quarrying industry between 1894 and 1905 the number of hands employed had gone down by 10,000, and yet, notwithstanding that reduction, the increase in the output of mineral amounted to no less than 16,000,000 tons. We never heard any voice raised on behalf of those 10,000 men. These instances can be extended, but I feel quite sure it is unnecessary. If our friends who oppose the Bill and who are interested in the trade are really so anxious to avoid the displacement of labour, I should like to ask them what they think of this particular letter which I have received to-day, to be read during this debate—

"I should like to bring to the knowledge of yourself and colleagues in the House an instance of the anxiety of the trade not to throw people out of employment. For twenty years I have been on the staff of a trade paper, first as a compositor, and then as a reader. About a month ago a petition against the Licensing Bill was passed round the office. I was the only one who did not sign it in my department, remarking that I did not think it should have been passed round. A few days afterwards I was given notice to quit, not for refusing to sign the petition, but because I left work without asking permission."

The individual concerned is prepared to challenge that reason before any properly constituted body. He is prepared to disprove the charge made against him. Those who are crying to-day about the displacement of labour are prepared to be guilty of an act of oppression such as I have brought to the notice of the House, In this debate far too much time has been taken up in dealing with one aspect of the case. It has been property, property, property. There has been an attempt, I believe a futile attempt, made to show that the Bill is going to do nothing for temperance, and that we are not justified in making the attack upon property because it is going to fail to do anything to promote the public good or sobriety. I question that very much. I think we have not heard sufficient of the temperance proposals in connection with the Bill. We have not heard sufficient of the powers that are going to be restored to the magistrates of the country. We have not heard sufficient of the powers to deal with the evils so far as child-life is concerned. None of those who have attacked the Bill dare say that a licence is a freehold. They knew perfectly well that their own leader, in the discussion on his Bill, declared that it was not a freehold, that there was no freehold in a licence, that his Bill did not propose to give any freehold. They have nevertheless concentrated their attack upon this aspect of the case. I venture to say that if the temperance proposals had been brought more prominently before the House it would have been to the advantage of the promoters of the Bill. I am delighted to think at any rate that the Bill appeals with force to the Labour members on this side of the House, and that every Member of our Party who is able to get to the House will be here to give his vote on behalf of the Second Reading of the measure.

SIR E. CARSON (Dublin University): I can assure the House that nobody regrets more than I do the absence to-night of the Leader of the Opposition, and especially the cause of that absence. I think hon. Members will agree that it would have been an advantage had the Leader of the Opposition been here to wind up this debate so far as the Opposition is concerned. Not only on the ground of the illness of the Leader of the Opposition do I regret the position in which I find myself. I have not the least ambition—I never have—to trespass on the patience of the House. I I have no ambition to make speeches. Upon this occasion, however, it has fallen to my lot to wind up the debate for the Opposition. I do not suppose for a moment that I shall be able to add much of any great importance to the arguments that have been already put before the House, but I shall do my best, and that is the most that I can do. I listened this afternoon to a very able speech from the Chancellor of the Exchequer. It was a very able speech, and may I say that its peroration, although I think it was more suited to the platform than the House of Commons, very much affected me. The right hon. Gentleman, although he differs from me in politics, I hope does not imagine for a moment that he abhors the evils of intemperance any more than I do. A right hon. Gentleman, a Member of this House, a few days ago in the country spoke of the numbers of men in this House, whom he met here, who, he said, were ruining their careers by their intemperate habits and their addiction to intoxicating liquor. I do not think it was a very worthy thing for the right hon. Gentleman to do, for I do not see much advantage in the country, nor do I believe it to be true, to represent that the House of Commons is not worthy to represent them. At all events, I do not suppose for a moment that my right hon. friend in his peroration included me amongst those who were wrecking their careers by their intemperate habits. I only wish I had the eloquence or even the memory to imitate the eloquence of the right hon. Gentleman upon this question of intemperance. I can assure him I agree with every word he said. If I could repeat his speech from memory I would make it part of my own on the present occasion. But when the right hon. Gentleman spoke of the great evils of intemperance in this country, he forgot to explain to us how the Bill before the House was going in any serious way to affect the question. He forgot to show us, perhaps he did not forget, but could not by any material figures explain to us what was the connection between the number of licences and the amount of intemperance which he was so vividly depicting to the House. Do not let him imagine for a moment because I say that that I say there is no connection. I was a party to the Act of 1904. I put it before the House as a temperance reform. I believe it was such, and I believe that the way it has worked out has proved that in what we said we were right upon that occasion. I say as regards the present Bill there is nothing of temperance reform which can be worked out in relation to the reduction of public-houses contained in the present Bill which is not in a much more satisfactory way worked out in the Act of 1904. But the only disadvantage of our Act to hon. Gentlemen opposite was that it worked out this result without injury to anybody, whilst the Bill of my right hon. friend the Prime Minister seeks to work out the same result with injury to hundreds of thousands of persons. That seems to be the great ambition of all Radical Members when they produce measures before this House for what they are pleased to call social reform. There is no merit in any Bill proposed by right hon. Gentlemen opposite unless it does an injury to somebody—the injury and not the benefit to the community is the gist of this Bill. [MINISTERIAL laughter.] I quite understand the laugh. I do not mind it. You have never been able to settle much since you came into office, and that is because you have refused to settle anything by taking away the sting as regards those to whom you are opposed. That is the reason why you have failed to settle what I wish you would settle with all my heart—the education question, which has been before the House for so many years. Well, Sir, as regards the result of this Bill and the amount of injury it will cause: after all you look upon relative benefit and relative injury. You must take some sort of perspective view. What I mean is this. You ought not to confer an infinitesimal benefit upon a small portion of the community and the maximum amount of injury upon a large number of individuals. I could not help thinking of the words that were uttered the other night by that very sincere and very extreme temperance reformer, the hon. Member for the Spen Valley. In a speech of undoubted sincerity and great force he said—

> "In England and Wales there are 50 per cent. more licences in proportion to the population than there are in Scotland, Scotland is in the position that England and Wales will be in fourteen years after the passing of this Bill."

Well, Sir, if after fourteen years—after doing what I believe to be incalculable injury to a large number of people who have unfortunately invested their money—if we in this country and in Wales are only to be in the position of Scotland, I should like to know are we reaping sufficient benefit to compensate for the injury inflicted by this Bill? That is after fourteen years, when you have reduced your licences to the same proportion to the population as they are in Scotland. Have not we a right to ask what is the effect of that proportion upon the people of Scotland? Does anyone want this country to be in the same position as the people in Scotland? I do not say a word against the Scottish nation, but I heard a Scotsman once described as a man who keeps the Sabbath and everything else he can lay his hands upon. When I am told that the reduction of licences, with the enormous amount of disadvantage to innocent investors in licensed property in this country, is going to leave us at the end of fourteen years in the condition of Scotland, I ask is the game worth the candle? Therefore, I say that when the right hon. Gentleman made his speech this evening, which I can assure him with all sincerity appealed to me as, I hope, one who takes no low view of the duties of this House in relation to this question, I felt that if we are going to inflict this hardship on these investors, we ought to look for some better result than what we are told has followed in Scotland. The truth of the matter is, the reduction of the houses, I was going say, is only on the fringe of the question. I doubt very much if it approaches the fringe of the question. As regards the reduction of houses, it is not a question of temperance reform; it is a question, as all these licensing Acts are, of policing the districts in a more convenient way with a view to preventing the houses being carried on improperly. So far as that is a matter of temperance reform I admit it, but no further. So far as that is necessary, you have already got it without injury to anybody under the Act of 1904. The Prime Minister says the Opposition have miscalculated the character and the potency of the forces arrayed behind the Bill. I do not deny that great forces are arrayed behind the Bill, but I believe they are forces which do not take a prospective view of the real situation. May I be perfectly frank with the House, as I hope I always will be, and say that a large number of my own constituents are arrayed as forces behind the Bill, although it does not apply to Ireland. I should not be candid with the House if I did not admit so much, because I have had many communications on the subject. But I believe they misunderstand the question, and so far as I have been able to communicate personally with many of them I believe they will come, after hearing my arguments, to a very different conclusion. So far as I am concerned, I should consider myself a dishonourable man and unfitted to represent my constituency if I were to give any countenance to the main provisions of the Bill I am now criticising. It is the Government and not the Opposition who have miscalculated the forces in the country with regard to this Bill. It is not apathy to the drink evil that makes so many persons oppose the Bill. It is the belief that any temperance reform effected by the Bill will be infinitesimal, while the hardships inflicted will be very great. No greater mistake can be made than to suppose that the opposition to the Bill comes from sympathy with the brewers. To talk of brewers is not to speak of a small class like the Irish landlords, but of 300,000 or 400,000 people interested in breweries. It is useless to abuse the brewers. Why should they not defend their interests? Why should they not fight for their existence? Nothing amuses me more in this House than the way in which individual interests are fought for upon both sides. When it is a question of the interests of the Irish landlords there are hon. Members opposite who say: "It is only the Irish landlords; perish their interests." [OPPOSITION cries of "No, no."] If it happens to be the interests of English landlords which are at stake—and there are specimens of English landlords on the other side of the House—then they do not hesitate to take their part and plead on their own behalf. When it happens to be a question of colliery rights hon. Members opposite are just as quick at realising their own interests as hon. Members on this side. When it is a question of creating a privileged class amongst the community in relation to the laws of labour, hon. Members below the gangway are not in the least backward, and, what is more, they are exceedingly successful. I do not in the least begrudge them their success. But it is not sympathy with the brewers that is creating the agitation against the Bill. It is the feeling that a precedent is being set up by this Bill which will have far-reaching consequences in relation to all property and all vested interests. We ought to be very careful about these precedents. I will not quote Socialist and Radical journals as to what precedents may be created by this Bill. I might quote paragraphs from the *Daily News*, which once, at all events, was a great newspaper representing the political interests of hon. Gentlemen opposite. I am glad to see the Solicitor-General present. I take a peculiar interest in my hon. and learned friend's office. [AN HON. MEMBER: "A pecuniary interest?"] No, it is not a pecuniary interest, for it pays me much better to be where I am. The Solicitor-General is a great expert in creating precedents. He made a most interesting speech on this Bill, and I can assure the Solicitor-General that I listened to him with no unfriendly feeling. The Solicitor-General's argument was that the Bill is nothing but an extension of the Act of 1904. Thus the reduction of licences is but an extension, and when it is urged that all licences should receive compensation, it is pleaded that it is simply an extension of the previous Act to say that after fourteen years no licence will enjoy compensation. It is claimed as an extension also to say that old as well as new licences are to pay the monopoly value. This is the way in which precedents are created in the House. Hon. Members should be careful, however, in establishing precedents of this kind, for a time-limit as to compensation for recognised interests may be applied to every species of property which derives its sanction from the House of Commons. [" Oh, oh ! "] Take the case of railways. I think I could make a very pathetic speech as to the community's relation to railways by asking where do they get their monopoly, and contending that, as the House of Commons has conferred this monopoly, it has the right to resume it. Then there are the tramway companies, the gas companies, the electric lighting companies, all of whom have received their monopolies from the House of Commons, who therefore, according to the argument that has been used, can resume them by giving fourteen years notice. [AN HON. MEMBER: "That is already arranged for."] That is the precedent you are laying down by this Bill, and it is because those who have invested their money in these concerns feel that they are being hit by legislation of this kind, and not because they have any sympathy with the liquor trade and the brewery companies, that the forces of the country are arrayed against you. I know that the Prime Minister, whom I compliment on his well-earned elevation, said that the Opposition are talking of questions where there is property, and that the Government are talking of questions where they do not admit that there is any vested interest or any property. I think that there is a very narrow distinction, not in the abstract, but having regard to the realities, as to what is the question of interest in licences as they have existed under the law up to the present time. The whole argument has been—and upon it the Government have staked their whole defence of the Bill—that we must look upon a licence as having been granted for a year. That argument will not hold water on examination. It is not a true argument, it is not a sound argument; and—without meaning to give offence to right hon. Gentlemen opposite—I believe it to be a hypocritical argument. And why do I say so ? We have heard very little in the course of this debate as regards the question of the beer-house licences granted prior to 1869—the ante-1869 licences and of their right to annual renewal. Thirty thousand of these ante-1869 on-licences are to be affected by this Bill. Do you apply that argument to those licences ? We are constantly reminded from the other side of the House of the decision in "Sharp *v.* Wakefield" that there was only an annual grant, with the discretion of the justices to refuse it. Does any lawyer on the other side of the House deny that as regards these ante-1869 beer-houses, the licensees had an absolute right, subject to the conditions laid down in the Act of Parliament, to have a renewal whether the justices liked it or not ? The Act says, if the licensee complies with the conditions with regard to the conduct of the house and other matters—

> "It shall not be lawful for the justices to refuse it."

If ever there was a vested interest created by the House of Commons, it was the interest created by the ante-1869 licences. One gentleman, whose name at all events will be received with respect by those who practice in my profession—I mean Sir Harry Poland—in giving evidence before a Committee of the House of Commons, said that that was looked upon as a statutory freehold, subject to the fulfilment of conditions. What is the use of asking us on this side of the House about the question of vested interest when you are giving it the go-by to the extent of one-third of the whole of the licences you are going to take away ? I take the liberty of asking the right hon. Gentleman opposite—does he deny that the ante-1869 beer houses had a statutory right to renewal, subject to the conditions in the Act of Parliament ?

MR. ASQUITH: You set us the example in 1904.

SIR E. CARSON: I did not think I should draw the Prime Minister. No, Sir, we provided that none of these licences should be taken away without compensation.

MR. ASQUITH: Which they had paid for.

SIR E. CARSON: Which they were willing to pay for, and which we provided by the Act should be calculated upon the basis that they were statutory freeholds. There is the question of precedent again in the question of whether these men are statutory freeholders. Does the right hon. Gentleman really think it is any answer to what I am saying if he says that not one of them should be disturbed without full compensation for the value of his licence? Does he say that is a precedent? Does he say, not as Prime Minister but as a great lawyer, that that is a real answer to what I have been stating? It is no answer. He wants to hold us on a legal technicality. [AN HON. MEMBER: "You want to hold him."] Yes, I want to hold him. I always notice that when it suits this House there is nothing they so much condemn as a legal technicality and a lawyer who puts it forward. In point of fact, this House suits itself to the particular matter in hand. It can find a precedent or a reason for anything. Lawyers are often accused of holding a brief on one side, but we do not hold briefs any more than politicians do when they wish to put forward a particular view, and I know that the Prime Minister would be the last to disparage the views of lawyers in this House. I remember when the Irish Land Act of 1881 was being passed, when they wanted to turn the yearly tenant, who had nothing but the expectancy of being kept on from year to year, into a practical freeholder, they said: "He has been kept on from year to year to such an extent that he has looked upon himself as a freeholder, and why should we not turn him into what he practically is?" And they did. It suited the Radical Party at that time, and so they made use of that argument. So little was left of the rights of the landlord that the landlord asked for compensation. Their answer was: "Nonsense, his expectation was so great that he was really a freeholder at the time." Now, when you talk of a licence-holder who has an expectancy of perpetual renewal under the law which you yourselves have created you say: "Oh, no, we cannot turn him into a freeholder. How can we, for all he has is a yearly tenancy in his licence. What does it matter that he has always in practice been treated as a freeholder; we fall back on our legal technical right." As regards the 60,000 licences outside the ante-1869 licences you are ignoring the whole of the facts when you treat these licences as a mere annual interest. That is as fraudulent an argument as ever was addressed to the House of Commons. Who treated the licence-holders as if a licence was a vested interest, or something very much more than a yearly interest? Everybody! But, first of all, the State did, because it taxed them. The Chancellor of the Exchequer said we merely taxed a marketable security. That was not the real fact of the case. I remember a very remarkable speech made in this House by the late Lord Goschen—Mr. Goschen as he then was, in 1895—and I now commend it to the House. Speaking on 8th April, 1895, he said—

> "If publicans have no vested interest in these licences why does the Chancellor of the Exchequer tax them? I know the right hon. Gentleman (Sir William Harcourt) and I have derived hundreds of thousands of pounds from the view that a licence was not only an annual licence, but entitled to renewal. Does he deny that? He does not; he is not such a robber as he would make himself out to be. Nor am I, or I should share his criminality. . . . The Law Officers say there is no vested interest in licences, and that the holders are entitled to no compensation whatever. I feel a criminal after what I have heard. The Chancellor of the Exchequer not long ago had an estate of nearly three millions composed almost entirely of the value of public-houses. These public-houses would not have been worth one-fourth of the whole amount if there had been no vested interest. It was the expectation of the vested interest that put the money into the right hon. Gentleman's pocket."

These vested interests had put millions into the pocket of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Where have they gone? To the benefit of the nation. And now we are going to ask them at the end of fourteen years to pay it over again in order that there may be, to use the words of the Under-Secretary for the Home Department, an abounding revenue for the State. "Oh! but," says the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and this is very important, "we only look upon it as an expectation." I hold in my hand a document that issued, not for the purposes of this debate, but in the year 1890—a document by order of this House, to show how licensed houses were to be dealt with in estimating the succession duties—death duties. In this document it is stated on the part of the Inland Revenue that upon the death of a freeholder publican the annual value of his freehold is treated in succession duty accounts as permanently enhanced by a licence. It is enhanced in the estimation of the Government as lasting the whole freehold, which means until "kingdom come," whatever that may be. Yet this is only an annual interest, you know! In the case of the death of the holder of leasehold premises, in estimating for probate duty, it is again presumed that the licence will continue. A great deal was said by the right hon. Gentlemen this afternoon about robbery by the brewers, but what about robbery by the Government? The hon. Member for Coventry the other night spoke of the Government being model employers. What about their being the model assessors of the taxes of the country? Sir, that one paper issued by the Treasury Department—a document which is in existence, I believe, down to the present moment—is enough to condemn this Bill. What does it mean? I do ask the House, whether they agree with me or not on the main question, to consider this in all seriousness. Are you going to say, to the publican: "Look here, when we want to take money out of the licensed trade we tell them the licence is a permanent interest, but when we want to take away their trade from them, the only argument we have is that the former argument is a falsehood, and they have no permanent interest at all?" Is any Government entitled to go on making these double statements to the publican—statements which I say are of an absolutely reckless and irreconcilable kind? It is not sympathy with the brewers that is creating the opposition to the Bill; it is because the people of this country never believe, and never will believe, in any Government presided over by a Prime Minister, I care not who he may be, who claims to say in two different voices: "Your licence is a permanency when I want money, but it is only a yearly interest when I want to do away with it." Everybody knows that it is not merely the Government who have set the example as regards the way of treating licences. There are the justices—and the Government are responsible for what they do, because they appoint the justices through the Lord Chancellor. What have the justices done? It has been a common practice with the justices when a man applies for a licence to say: "While we admit you probably ought to have this licence, we will tell you what you ought to do. Go and buy up or ten or twelve licences—places that are difficult of police supervision, and others of that kind—and then come back to us, and we will see whether we can give you the licence or not." I was told by a gentleman of my own profession with as large experience as any man in licensing matters, that he has known as much as £20,000 or £30,000 to be paid in buying up licences before coming to the justices and asking them for a new licence. Yet, having paid that money, are they now to be told that the licence is only given for a year and that next year the magistrates may exercise their discretion? Are they going to buy up £30,000 worth of licences and surrender them for the benefit of the State, in order that next year you may take away the new licence? It may be a technicality, but it is that kind of past conduct on the part of successive Governments and on the part of the magistrates that has led to the idea of the public that no Government and no House of Parliament would take away these interests without properly compensating the people from whom they are taken. Well now, when successive Governments have bought up these licences, what have they paid for them? I remember acting as Solicitor-General in a case where the Government required premises which unfortunately comprised a public-house. I can assure you, Sir, that no political feelings of mine prevented the putting forth the most potent arguments to the jury to the effect that almost nothing ought to be allowed in relation to those licensed premises; that they were really worth nothing. Why, the jury laughed at me! And the only solace I had was that I could afford to scorn their laughter, for after all, the Government had to pay, not for a yearly licence, but for the full value of the premises, exactly as if such licences were going to continue. In addition to that, there has not been a statesman in almost the last twenty years who has not made speeches leading the public to the same conclusion. A statement has been quoted of Mr. Gladstone. The observation made by the right hon. Gentleman opposite this afternoon was that Mr. Gladstone made that statement before the decision in "Sharp *v.* Wakefield." Before "Sharp *v.* Wakefield" the magistrates had frequently refused to renew. "Sharp *v.* Wakefield" laid down no new law. A statement was made, by a gentleman whom all this House respects, with regard to the reduction of licences, in the course of which statement he said, speaking of the reduction of houses, that he did not believe in cheap morality; and that if the nation at large deemed it necessary that the members of a certain trade should be reduced in numbers and thereby deprived of their means of livelihood, they were bound to compensate those persons, not only for the capital they had sunk in their trade, but also for the years and the lives they had devoted to their trade. That speaker was Lord Wolverhampton, a Member of the present Government, who has gone to another place in order that he may help to abolish it. I might quote many other opinions, but the truth of the matter is that these quotations have very little effect in this debate. The right hon. Gentleman asked me a question and I will answer it: "Have the State," he asked, "the right to get back the monopoly value?" I do not deny it. They have the right. The reason they have the right is because they have the power. Yes, Sir, that is the real reason. What is the use of talking about rights in relation to this House? It is not a question of whether they have the right, but the question is, Under what conditions are they going to do it? That is the whole question, and the one in which the country is interested. I ask the right hon. Gentleman this question in return. Can he produce any precedent where, under circumstances such as these, when the interests in licences has been treated by the Government and every other member of the community as permanent interests, this House has, by a measure such as this, ventured to take them away? The hon. Member for the Spen Valley—it is on account of my respec for him that I mention the argument which he used, and which he commended to lawyers—said that up to 1860, in what are known as Bishop's leases, the tenants were accustomed to renewals whenever they fell in, but he said that under the legislation of that year that was no longer the case. He gave that as a parallel case; but all these renewals were granted upon renewal fines, every one of them, which meant the money paid for the consideration of the value of the renewal. Yes, Sir, but it does not end there. The Legislature, by the Act of 1860, gave notice of the transfer of this property to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners and they gave notice that in twenty years or twenty-four years there would be no more renewals. But they did something more than that, they added on ten years to the lease. And they did something more than that, because they said the lessee must purchase the reversion, and if he could not get the reversion, the lessor must purchase him out with the ten years added on. Oh, yes; the hon. Member need not shake his head, I read the Act of Parliament to-day. The precedent which the hon. Member cites is not a precedent in his favour, it is one in our favour. Let the right hon. Gentleman get up and under this Bill say: "We think these renewals ought not to go on; we will add fourteen years to your term, and will now purchase out the whole lot of them at fifteen years purchase of the value of the trade." But that is not the proposition of the right hon. Gentleman. That is the only precedent that has been cited and, as I have said, it is in our favour. I pass on for a moment to what happens at the end of this period. Every single licence that has been granted is abolished. Is that fair? And there is something more than that. The Bill gives the right to any district during the term of fourteen years to pass a prohibition against new licences. If that prohibition remains in force in any district, what is the result? There will be no licences at all. We are told that the justices may renew these licences. They will not have the power, and the districts will be without licences altogether. Is that what is in the mind of the Government? What you are to do is, you are to purchase. If the licence is re-granted, you are to purchase the monopoly value. Each licensee from year to year is to purchase the monopoly value. I could quote cases where public bodies, like the Metropolitan Board of Works, have sold licensed premises with the idea that the licence was to continue, for enormous sums, which have gone to the benefit of the public. I say there is no justice in this Bill. Then you set up a tribunal—the new Radical idea—of Commissioners. There are Commissioners under the Small Holdings Act who are to override the county council. There are Commissioners under this Act who are to have powers of taxation—not taxation by this House, taxation by paid men. That is the new Radical idea. Taxation with representation, the representation being that you are appointed for a political job. And thus you are to carry it out. I pass from that. No appeal to the Courts is a small point apparently. It is a great point in reality. I always suspect when a Government refuses to go to the Courts. (MINISTERIAL laughter.] That is a very cheap sneer. I always suspect when a Government refuses to allow decisions of these political and partisan tribunals to be submitted to independent consideration. One of the objections made to our 1904 Act by the late Prime Minister—whom I hope I shall ever regard with deep respect—was that we allowed investigations as regards the value of premises to be sent to the Somerset House officials instead of to the Courts. So we gave an appeal to the Courts. This Bill takes away the appeal to the Courts, and leaves it to the Commissioners at Somerset House. I say that all that shows the partisan nature of this Bill. It all shows that you are considering one section of the community only, and not the community at large. I must say one more word before I conclude. The matter is one of very extreme importance, and, mind you, it is not a matter that is going to end by the debate to-night. After all that has been done, are you really going to effect any improvement, having regard to the admissions of your own side in reference to bogus clubs? The right hon. Gentleman who spoke to-night as to the evils of the drink traffic said not one word about clubs. The right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister in his lucid speech on the introduction of the Bill spoke of the suppression of licences being followed by the growth of clubs. He said that the increase from a few years ago was from 6,371 to 7,110. That is in clubs. What about the increase of the members of those clubs? What about the ready-made *clientèle* of those clubs? The hon. Member for Blackburn, who represents some labour distr icts inthis country, said that—

> "There had been an increase in the number of clubs in the last few years and he believed there would be a much more rapid increase if the power to form clubs were left as it was in the Bill. There were now clubs which were as much tied-houses as any public-houses. Unless this question was dealt with drastically they might give up all hope of effecting temperance reform."

The hon. and learned Member for Anglesey said—

> "As to that part of the Bill dealing with clubs, it was absolutely no good whatever taking away the licence if a club would be substituted. His friends on the Government Bench must take their courage in both hands and deal with clubs. It was no good their passing a Licensing Bill on these lines. They should make the club pay licence duty."

Yes, Sir, but the only matter, so far as I can see, that the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister is inclined to give way on is the question of clubs. I use the words of my hon. friend the Member for Anglesey opposite—

> "What is really the use of passing this Bill unless you are going to deal drastically with clubs which are going to take the place of public-house."

The hon. Member for Haggerston said—

> "The clubs were too strong. You could not touch them without a revolution in the country."

There is a good deal of truth in what he said.

*SIR RANDAL CREMER: I am sorry to interrupt the right hon. and learned Gentleman, but the statement he has put into my mouth I never used. The right hon. Gentleman must have been misinformed by those who gave him the information which he has just given to the House.

SIR E. CARSON: Yes, I have been misinformed; I took it from information but the hon. Gentleman expressed himself very strongly that it was impossible to touch clubs.

*Sir RANDAL CREMER: I did not say it is impossible, but that it is very undesirable.

Sir E. CARSON: I should like to express regret that I in the first place misrepresented the hon. Gentleman. It is very undesirable. Why undesirable?

*Sir RANDAL CREMER: Because unnecessary.

Sir E. CARSON: Because it is unnecessary. Yet we have the testimony of hon. Members below the gangway and opposite, and the Prime Minister himself, that it is a growing evil. It is no use saying that this Bill is being passed in the interests of temperance reform unless you deal with these clubs. The hon. Member for Haggerston thinks it is impossible to deal with these clubs. I believe clubs are growing too strong for you, and that the only remedy is to treat these clubs as licensed premises, and all the suggestions have been in that direction. In this Bill you are setting up annual licensing sessions for these clubs, and in the long run you will have the same trouble with these clubs that you have with public-houses. The truth of the matter is that you cannot deal with the question in the way you are trying to do unless you are able to put forward the theory that the traffic in drink is an immoral traffic, and nobody has said that it is. I should like to say, in conclusion, that if your Bill passes, I believe it will settle nothing. I notice that the President of the Board of Trade, in his farewell letter to the electors of Manchester before he went to woo a constituency to which this Bill will not apply, said that the next time a contest arose in North-West Manchester the power of the licensed trade—the excessive political power—would have vanished by the passing of this Bill. I do not know whether he was expressing the views of the Prime Minister. I think he is entirely mistaken. By passing this Bill you will not get rid of the difficulties of the licensing question. Do not think for a moment that I believe it is a healthy influence in politics, but what will be the state of affairs if this Bill passes? For fourteen years there will not be an election or a by-election at which the candidate will not be confronted by the trade and the friends of the trade with the question: "Are you in favour or not of putting an end to the section of the Act of Parliament which confiscates our licences at the end of fourteen years?" I do not believe this Bill is a real contribution to temperance; I do not believe the country looks upon it as such; I believe that altogether above and beyond the opposition to the Bill the fear of the country is that you are by this measure creating a precedent as regards other property, and so far as I am concerned I will with all my heart oppose it.

Mr. ASQUITH: The right hon. and learned Gentleman who has just sat down, and whom I thank most heartily for his courteous and kindly references to myself, which are the more welcome as coming from an old friend and fellow-worker in another sphere, is, as we all know, a most accomplished advocate. I think that he need not have made any apology to the House for the length of his speech. I am glad he made it as long as he did, for we may now assume that in that speech, at the conclusion of four days debate, we know the worst that can be said against this Bill. I confess as I listened to a great part of my right hon. and learned friend's speech it appeared to me not to be directed against this measure at all, but that it would have been more relevant if it had been uttered in this House in the year 1904 against the proposals of the Government of that day. For what was the main staple of the argument to which the right hon. and learned Gentleman devoted the larger part of his speech? It was that the State, by taxation, and in other ways, had treated the interest in a licence as though it were a permanent and perpetual property. Well, if that is so, what is to be said in justification for the confiscatory legislation of 1904? The legislation of 1904 proceeds upon the assumption that those licences may be extinguished—extinguished upon any scale which the justices for the time being think proper; and at whose expense? When the public in the public interest takes property for public purposes, according to the invariable practice of our law and Constitution compensation comes from public funds. But the right hon. and learned Gentleman himself is the author of a proposal which recognises that, so far from this being an analogous case, when in the public interest the extension of the system of suppressing licences is sanctioned, the cost is to come, not from the coffers of the State, but from the pockets of the trade itself. That is quite sufficient to dispose of nearly two-thirds of the right hon. Gentleman's argument. I am not going to trespass on the attention of the House more than a few moments, but I should like, at the conclusion of this most interesting and most momentous debate, in a few sentences to repeat the questions which I addressed to the Opposition at other stages, to see how far they have been answered by the speeches made in the debate. Let me take them *seriatim.* My first question was this. I asked it on the First Reading, and again on the Second Reading. Is a compulsory reduction of licences within a prescribed time,—and making due allowances as this Bill does for variety in local conditions—upon a uniform scale—is it, or is it not, a necessary step to be taken if you are to make any real advance on the path of temperance reform ? When I asked that question in introducing the Bill I thought there was only one answer to it. In point of reason it would seem to me obvious, self-evident, and indisputable, that there must be a connection between the multiplication of facilities for the consumption of drink and the use and abuse of those facilities. If you turn from reason to authority, the authorities are overwhelming and concurrent. Let me quote once more the statement from a great authority. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, in giving evidence before the House of Lords Committee some years ago, said—

> "The enormous number of public-houses, which is clearly out of proportion to anything like the legitimate wants of the people, must tend to increase the temptation."

If that is so, a *pro tanto* reduction in those opportunities will have its effect in reducing this vice to which temptation is so offered. That is also the recorded opinion both of the majority and the minority of the Peel Commission, and, what is more important from the point of view of Gentlemen opposite, it is the underlying principle, if there be a principle at all, in the Act of 1904. As I said a few days ago, the only answer to that proposition is this—that if you reduce the number of public-houses without taking any further steps, you will not provide an adequate security against the upspringing in their place of equally extensive facilities for the consumption of drink in the shape of clubs. That is the argument of the right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down. I have always not only admitted, but asserted that there was a danger, and a real danger here, which has to be effectually dealt with. But as the argument is pushed so far, I must point out that experience does not show that a reduction of public-houses is accompanied by a corresponding increase in the growth of clubs. Since the passing of the Act of 1904, the increase in the number of clubs has only been one-seventh of the diminution in the number of licences that have taken place.

SIR E. CARSON: What has been the increase in the membership of the clubs ?

MR. ASQUITH: You will find no great discrepancy if you take the membership also. I do not want to labour that proposition, because it is self-evident; but there is a second question. It is this: Is the change which we propose in this Bill in the scale of compensation during the statutory term of reduction justifiable and justified ?

MR. CHAPLIN (Surrey, Wimbledon): No.

MR. ASQUITH: The right hon. Gentleman opposite says "No." I will show that it is. The hon. Member for Kingston, who moved the Amendment in a speech which has been highly praised, but not more highly praised than it deserved, cited a number of figures showing the contrast between the scale of compensation which has been paid during the last three years under the Kennedy judgment and the sums which would have been receivable under the new scale proposed by the Bill had it been in force. The figures were striking and effective for the moment; but they were only effective because they proceeded on two assumptions: first, that the basis of compensation introduced by the Kennedy judgment was intended by Parliament to be, and was, a reasonable one; and next, on the assumption that the assessment of the licensed house under Schedule A of the income-tax was equitable and fairly represented the difference in value between licensed and unlicensed premises. I venture to deny both these propositions. As to the assessment of licensed houses, we propose in the Bill—one of the most salutary provisions in the Bill—to give a year to enable the process of re-assessment to be effectually carried out; and as to the validity and reasonableness of the basis of compensation adopted in the Kennedy judgment, I have never yet heard any one practically acquainted with these matters defend the assessment. For one year and a half after the passing of the Act of 1904 the scale of compensation actually adopted by the Inland Revenue was that which is proposed in the Bill; and it was adopted and practised as far as I know without any outcry from the brewers, and apparently with the acquiescence of the right hon. Gentleman and the other authors of that Act. Then again—and this is a most important point—the Kennedy judgment establishes what I conceive to be both an unfair and an impolitic distinction between the quantum of compensation to be given to tied and free houses. The tied house gets the benefit; the free house is left out in the cold. But in this Bill we propose to put them on a level and uniform basis. Lastly our Bill secures, or is intended to secure—and I will take care in Committee, if the language of the drafting is not adequate for that purpose, that it shall be made so—separate compensation upon a reasonable basis for the publican's loss of profits through the discontinuance of his business. He is intended under this Bill to be treated as a yearly tenant and compensated for his loss of business as such, and the House will observe that his compensation will not dwindle or diminish with the shorter duration of the time-limit. The third question I ask is: Are the conditions we propose for the resumption by the State of the monopoly value in principle adequate? ["No."] The right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down said that we were dealing in a very unfair and uneven way with this particular monopoly as compared with others, and he instanced railways, gasworks, waterworks, and other undertakings of that kind. In the case of railways there is an Act of Parliament passed by Sir Robert Peel, not a confiscator either by principle or by practice, which enables the State to take them back again when they have paid a certain rate of dividend. There is not a single gas or waterworks in this country whose distributable amount of profits among its shareholders is not limited and defined by the price which it charges for the article. It is only in this particular case where we have given a class of persons the most valuable monopoly of all that the State has neglected from first to last to claim any share whatever. So much for the right hon. Gentlemen's analogies. But the question in this category which I am now for the moment discussing may be stated in other words, in this way: Are the equities of the case to be adequately met by a time-limit? That is the question—not the precise duration of time; but can it be met by a time-limit?

AN HON. MEMBER: No.

MR. ASQUITH: No, again. I want to say, if I may, late as the hour is, a few words on this point, which goes to the very root of the whole question. We have been confronted in this connection in the course of this debate by some of the strangest paradoxes even in the philosophy of confiscation. Just let me illustrate what I mean. Take a very common case. A man becomes a tenant of a dwelling-house, or of a shop, upon an annual tenancy from year to year. He spends, in course of time, if the tenancy is renewed, almost as a matter of course, a considerable amount of capital in structural improvements, and in extending the scope of the business he has carried on in the shop. He has an expectation founded upon practice, upon custom, upon what has happened between the landlord and himself that

that tenancy will continue to be renewed, and on the faith of that expectation he goes on living there, as it were digging his roots every year deeper into the soil. But there is a change of landlord or there is a change of mood in the old landlord. Suddenly, like a bolt from the blue, he receives—what? Six month's notice to quit, and out he goes, bag and baggage, reaping none of the unexhausted fruits of the capital which he has there expended, and if any purblind and revolutionary Radical ventures to say that that is a hard case he is told it is a legitimate exercise of the rights of property. Is that confiscation? Will right hon. Gentlemen on that bench regard it as a case of confiscation? Is a six months time-limit sufficient for such a purpose? Yet so it is according to the law of England. The right hon. Gentleman had the temerity to refer to the Irish Land Act of 1881. The Irish Land Act was a recognition of the validity of these expectations and customs. It secured the tenant to some extent in the possession of it, and was denounced by the whole Tory Party of that day. That was denounced by the whole Tory Party as a gigantic act of confiscation. Let us compare the case I have given with that of this Bill. Here is the case of a licence of a public-house. We know very well who it is really now. It is not the licensee at all. But let us take the theory of the law, the case of a licensee who gets an interest from the State, not from a private individual, as the law says, for not more than one year. The licensee pays for that privilege not a rack rent like many a tenant in his dwelling-house or his shop, but a most inadequate sum in the shape of licence duty. He also expends capital in building up and extending his business, which requires both a local and a personal goodwill. How do we propose to treat him? To give him six months notice and then turn him out into the street? We give him fifteen years notice, and that is denounced as confiscation.

Mr. LYTTELTON: He is paying compensation all the time.

Mr. ASQUITH: What is he paying by way of compensation? He is paying an insurance against the possibility of his licence being determined within the fourteen years. We give him fifteen years notice, and the very people who defend as the elementary exercise of the rights of property the action of the landlord in the case to which I have referred denounce this as a piece of unexampled confiscation. I explained a few moments ago the philosophy of confiscation, and I have given the House two parallel cases. I shall be much obliged to anybody who can point out to me any flaw in the parallel. You talk of confiscation in connection with this. Let me suggest another way in which this matter might be dealt with. It is going to be my duty, I am glad to say for the last time, to introduce the Budget in a day or two. Supposing on Thursday next, this Bill never having been introduced, I came down and finding, as every Chancellor of the Exchequer finds, that the State is in need of additional resources I were to say: "I think it is about time we revised our scale of licence duties," and that in pursuance of that design I suggested to the House that instead of the present perfectly trumpery and illusory duties exacted from the higher valued houses there should be a really good, swinging licence duty—would that be confiscation? I do not get any answer. I will let the House so far into my secrets as to say I am not going to propose it. But supposing next year or the year after my right hon. friend who succeeds me—assuming that this Bill is not passed into law—being a more moderate-minded man than I am, were to say: "Oh, well, we won't do this thing all at once; we will do it step by step. I am going to propose that, say, for the next ten years there shall be an ascending scale of licence duties."

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: That is what Gentlemen below the gangway propose.

Mr. ASQUITH: I am not talking of Gentlemen below the gangway. I am talking about what may happen on the Treasury Bench. Suppose, I say, my right hon. friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in his Budget for next year, should propose an ascending scale of duties, carefully graduated to ease the application as far as possible of the principle of bringing up the scale to where it ought to stand, would that be confiscation? [" No."] No, it would not. [" Fiscal reform."] Now, whether I were to take the whole monopoly value, or the Chancellor of the Exchequer were to proceed step by step with an ascending scale of duties to be paid, that would not be confiscation; but here we, taking nothing at all now and giving fifteen years notice, are to be denounced for " confiscation." Not to detain the House longer, I will repeat the question with which I ventured to begin the debate on the Second Reading, and which hon. and right hon. Gentlemen will answer by their votes: Do you or do you not approve of the principle of a time-limit? [OPPOSITION cries " of No," and " Hear, hear."] At any rate, that is a clear issue on which the division will be taken. Let me in a few concluding words emphasise by way of contrast the two positions we respectively take up. We on this side—the Government, at any rate—say that a licence is a valuable privilege, conferred for a year by the State, which can be terminated without notice. I do not dwell on the question of ante-1869 beer-houses. I do not dwell on them, but I do not want to pass them by. What is the case? By the Act of 1869 they were given a privilege which they until recently possessed, and by whom was that privilege undermined and destroyed? By two measures both proceeding from the Tory Party. The Act of 1882 was promoted by the late Lord Ritchie, a good Conservative if ever there was one. [" Oh."] What, does a man cease to be a Conservative when he goes out of office? He, with the assent of his Party, induced Parliament to cut off without a penny of compensation the privilege of the ante-1869 beer-houses in their off-licences, and the right hon. Gentleman opposite brought the whole within the legislation of 1904. We quite agree that the expectation of a continuance of licences has grown up which makes it both politic and equitable to postpone the assertion of the State's title to resume to a time sufficient in length for the prudent trader to set his house in order and provide for the disappearance of monopoly value in the only true sense of the term. That is our position. What is the position of right hon. Gentlemen opposite? We have just heard in the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dublin University the latest and authorised version; and, however it may be disguised, it amounts to this, that a licence for the sale of intoxicating liquors has all the qualities of a permanent and indefeasible freehold—in defiance of the express provisions of the Act of 1904 which they themselves passed—and cannot be justly taken away in the public interest except at the public expense. If that is so—and I am glad to find it assented to—[Some cries of " No."]—I venture to say that rarely has a conflict between the public and private interests in a matter of supreme importance to the public interest been more clearly and definitely presented to the House. It is whether or not in a question perhaps more vital than any other to the social progress of the people, public or private interest shall predominate. That, and nothing more nor less, is the issue the House is now called upon to decide.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 397; Noes, 147. (Division List No. 76.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Acland, Francis Dyke
Adkins, W. Ryland D.
Agar-Robartes, Hon. T. C. R.
Agnew, George William
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Alden, Percy
Allen, A. Acland (Christchurch)
Allen, Charles P. (Stroud)
Armitage, R.
Armstrong, W. C. Heaton
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Asquith, Rt. Hn. Herbert Henry
Astbury, John Meir
Atherley-Jones, L.
Baker, Sir John (Portsmouth)
Baker, Joseph A. (Finsbury, E.
Balfour, Robert (Lanark)
Baring, Godfrey (Isle of Wight)
Barker, John
Barlow, Sir John E. (Somerset)
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Barnes, G. N.
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Barry, Redmond J. (Tyrone, N.)
Beale, W. P.
Beauchamp, E.
Beck. A. Cecil
Bell, Richard
Bellairs, Carlyon
Belloc, Hilaire Joseph Peter R.
Benn, Sir J. Williams (Devonp'rt)
Benn, W. (T'w'r Hamlets, S. Geo.
Bennett, E. N.
Berridge, T. H. D.
Bethell, Sir J H. (Essex, Romf'

Bethell, T. R. (Essex, Maldon)
Birrell, Rt. Hon. Augustine
Black, Arthur W.
Boland, John
Boulton, A. C. F.
Bowerman, C. W.
Brace, William
Bramsdon, T. A.
Branch, James
Brigg, John
Bright, J. A.
Brocklehurst, W. B.
Brodie, H. C.
Brooke, Stopford
Brunner, J. F. L. (Lancs., Leigh)
Brunner, RtHn Sir J T(Cheshire
Bryce, J. Annan
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Buckmaster, Stanley O.
Burns, Rt. Hon. John
Burnyeat, W. J. D.
Burt, Rt. Hon. Thomas
Buxton, Rt. Hn. Sydney Charles
Byles, William Pollard
Cameron, Robert
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Causton, Rt. Hn RichardKnight
Cawley, Sir Frederick
Chance, Frederick William
Channing, Sir Francis Allston
Cherry, Rt. Hon. R. R.
Cleland, J. W.
Clough, William
Clynes, J. R.
Cobbold, Felix Thornley
Collins, Stephen (Lambeth)
Collins, Sir Wm. J. (S. Pancras, W
Compton-Rickett, Sir J.
Cooper, G. J.
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Corbett, C H (Sussex, E. Grinst'd
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Cornwall, Sir Edwin A.
Cory, Sir Clifford John
Cotton, Sir H. J. S.
Cowan, W. H.
Cox, Harold
Craig, Herbert J. (Tynemouth)
Cremer, Sir William Randal
Crooks, William
Crosfield, A. H.
Cross, Alexander
Crossley, William J.
Curran, Peter Francis
Dalmeny, Lord
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, David(MontgomeryCo
Davies, Ellis William (Eifion)
Davies, M. Vaughan- (Cardigan)
Davies, Timothy (Fulham)
Davies, W. Howell (Bristol, S.)
Dickinson, W. H. (St. Pancras, N
Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P.
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dobson, Thomas W.
Duckworth, James
Duncan, C. (Barrow-in-Furness
Duncan, J. H. (York, Otley)
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)
Dunne, Major E. Martin(Walsall
Edwards, Clement (Denbigh)
Edwards, Enoch (Hanley)
Edwards, Sir Francis (Radnor)
Ellis, Rt. Hon. John Edward
Erskine, David C.
Essex, R. W.
Esslemont, George Birnie
Evans, Sir Samuel T.
Everett, R. Lacey
Faber, G. H. (Boston)
Fenwick, Charles
Ferens, T. R.
Ferguson, R. C. Munro
Fetherstonhaugh, Godfrey
Ffrench, Peter
Fiennes, Hon. Eustace
Findlay, Alexander
Foster, Rt. Hon. Sir Walter
Freeman-Thomas, Freeman
Fuller, John Michael F.
Fullerton, Hugh
Furness, Sir Christopher
Gibb, James (Harrow)
Gill, A. H.
Gladstone, Rt. Hn Herbert John
Glen-Coats, Sir T. (Renfrew, W.)
Glendinning, R. G.
Glover, Thomas
Gooch, George Peabody (Bath)
Gordon, J.
Grant, Corrie
Greenwood, G. (Peterborough)
Greenwood, Hamar (York)
Grey, Rt. Hon. Sir Edward
Griffith, Ellis J.
Grove, Archibald
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Gulland, John W.
Gurdon, Rt Hn Sir W. Brampton
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Hall, Frederick
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Lewis
Hardy, J. Keir(Merthyr Tydvil)
Hardy, George A. (Suffolk)
Harmsworth, Cecil B. (Worc'r)
Harmsworth, R. L(Caithn'ss-sh
Hart-Davies, T.
Harvey, A. G. C. (Rochdale)
Harvey, W. E. (Derbyshire, N. E.
Harwood, George
Haslam, James (Derbyshire)
Haslam, Lewis (Monmouth)
Haworth, Arthur A.
Hazel, Dr. A. E.
Hedges, A. Paget
Helme, Norval Watson
Hemmerde, Edward George
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Henderson, J. M. (Aberdeen, W.)
Henry, Charles S.
Herbert, Col. Sir Ivor (Mon., S.)
Herbert, T. Arnold (Wycombe)
Higham, John Sharp
Hobart, Sir Robert
Hobhouse, Charles E. H.
Hodge, John
Holland, Sir William Henry
Holt, Richard Durning
Hooper, A. G.
Hope, John Deans (Fife, West)
Hope, W. Bateman (Somerset, N
Horniman, Emslie John
Horridge, Thomas Gardner
Howard, Hon. Geoffrey
Hudson, Walter
Hutton, Alfred Eddison
Hyde, Clarendon
Illingworth, Percy H.
Isaacs, Rufus Daniel
Jackson, R. S.
Jacoby, Sir James Alfred
Jardine, Sir J.
Jenkins, J.
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Johnson, W. (Nuneaton)
Jones, Sir D. Brynmor (Swansea
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Jowett, F. W.
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kekewich, Sir George
Kelley, George D.
Kincaid-Smith, Captain
King, Alfred John (Knutsford)
Laidlaw, Robert
Lamb, Edmund G. (Leominster
Lamb, Ernest H. (Rochester)
Lambert, George
Lamont, Norman
Langley, Batty
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese, Sir Joseph F. (Accrington
Lehmann, R. C.
Lever, A. Levy (Essex, Harwich
Lever, W. H. (Cheshire, Wirral)
Levy, Sir Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, Rt. Hon. David
Lough, Rt. Hon. Thomas
Lupton, Arnold
Luttrell, Hugh Fownes
Lyell, Charles Henry
Lynch, H. B.
Macdonald, J. R. (Leicester)
Macdonald, J. M. (Falkirk B'ghs
Mackarness, Frederic C.
Maclean, Donald
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
Macpherson, J. T.
MacVeagh, Jeremiah (Down, S.
M'Callum, John M.
M'Crae, George
M'Kenna, Rt. Hon. Reginald
M'Laren, Sir C. B. (Leicester)
M'Laren, H. D. (Stafford, W.)
M'Micking, Major G.
Maddison, Frederick
Mallet, Charles E.
Manfield, Harry (Northants)
Mansfield, H. Rendall (Lincoln)
Markham, Arthur Basil
Marks, G. Croydon (Launceston)
Marnham, F. J.
Mason, A. E. W. (Coventry
Massie, J.
Menzies, Walter
Micklem, Nathaniel
Middlebrook, William
Molteno, Percy Alport
Mond, A.
Money, L. G. Chiozza
Montagu, E. S.
Montgomery, H. G.
Morgan, G. Hay (Cornwall)
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Morrell, Philip
Morse, L. L.
Morton, Alpheus Cleophas
Murray, Capt. Hn A C. (Kincard.

Murray, James (Aberdeen, E.)
Myer, Horatio
Napier, T. B.
Newnes, F. (Notts., Bassetlaw)
Newnes, Sir George (Swansea)
Nicholls, George
Nicholson, Charles N.(Doncast'r
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nussey, Thomas Willans
Nuttall, Harry
O'Donnell, C. J. (Walworth)
O'Grady, J.
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Parker, James (Halifax)
Partington, Oswald
Paulton, James Mellor
Pearce, Robert (Staffs, Leek)
Pearce, William (Limehouse)
Pearson, W.H.M. (Suffolk, Eye)
Perks, Robert William
Philipps, Col. Ivor (S'thampton
Philipps, J. Wynford (Pembroke
Philipps, Owen C. (Pembroke)
Pickersgill, Edward Hare
Pirie, Duncan V.
Pollard, Dr.
Price, C. E. (Edinb'gh, Central)
Price, Robert John (Norfolk, E.
Priestley, Arthur (Grantham)
Priestley, W.E.B. (Bradford, E.)
Pullar, Sir Robert
Radford, G. H.
Raphael, Herbert H.
Rea, Russell (Gloucester)
Rea, Walter Russell (Scarboro'
Rees, J. D.
Rendall, Athelstan
Richards, Thomas (W.Monm'th
Richards, T. F. (Wolverh'mpt'n
Richardson, A.
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roberts, Charles H. (Lincoln)
Roberts, G. H. (Norwich)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robertson, Sir G Scott(Bradf'rd
Robertson, J. M. (Tyneside)
Robinson, S.
Robson, Sir William Snowdon
Roe, Sir Thomas
Rogers, F. E. Newman
Rose, Charles Day
Rowlands, J.
Runciman, Rt. Hon. Walter
Russell, T. W.
Rutherford, V. H. (Brentford)
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Schwann, C. Duncan (Hyde)
Schwann, Sir C.E.(Manchester)
Scott, A.H.(Ashton under Lyne
Sears, J. E.
Seaverns, J. H.
Seddon, J.
Seely, Colonel
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Silcock, Thomas Ball
Simon, John Allsebrook
Sinclair, Rt. Hon. John
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smeaton, Donald Mackenzie
Snowden, P.
Soares, Ernest J.
Spicer, Sir Albert
Stanger, H. Y.
Stanley, Albert (Staffs. N. W.)
Stanley, Hn. A.Lyulph(Chesh.)
Steadman, W. C.
Stewart, Halley (Greenock)
Stewart-Smith, D. (Kendal)
Strachey, Sir Edward
Straus, B. S. (Mile End)
Stuart, James (Sunderland)
Summerbell, T.
Sutherland, J. E.
Taylor, Austin (East Toxteth)
Taylor, John W. (Durham)
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Tennant, Sir Edward (Salisbury
Tennant, H. J. (Berwickshire)
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E
Thomas, Sir A. (Glamorgan, E.)
Thomas, David Alfred(Merthyr
Thomasson, Franklin
Thompson, J.W.H (Somerset, E
Thorne, William
Tomkinson, James
Torrance, Sir A. M.
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Ure, Alexander
Verney, F. W.
Villiers, Ernest Amherst
Vivian, Henry
Wadsworth, J.
Walker, H. De R. (Leicester)
Walsh, Stephen
Walters, John Tudor
Walton, Joseph
Ward, John (Stokeupon Trent)
Ward W. Dudley(Southampt'n
Wardle, George J.
Waring, Walter
Wason, Rt.Hn.E (Clackmannan
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney)
Waterlow, D. S.
Watt, Henry A.
Wedgwood, Josiah C.
Weir, James Galloway
White Sir George (Norfolk)
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whitehead, Rowland
Whitley, John Henry (Halifax)
Whittaker, Sir Thomas Palmer
Wiles, Thomas
Williams, J. (Glamorgan)
Williams, Llewelyn(Carmarthen
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Williamson, A.
Wills, Arthur Walters
Wilson, Hon. G. G. (Hull, W.)
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W.R.)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid)
Wilson, J. H. (Middlesbrough)
Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh.N.)
Wilson, P. W. (St. Pancras, S.)
Wilson, W. T. (Westhoughton)
Winfrey, R.
Wodehouse, Lord
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Whiteley and Mr. J. A. Pease.

NOES.

Anson, Sir William Reynell
Anstruther-Gray, Major
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Rt. Hn. Hugh O.
Ashley, W. W.
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt. Hn. Sir H.
Balcarres, Lord
Baldwin, Stanley
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Baring, Capt. Hn. G (Winchester
Barnard, E. B.
Beach, Hn. Michael Hugh Hicks
Beckett, Hon. Gervase
Bertram, Julius
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bottomley, Horatio
Bowles, G. Stewart
Bridgeman, W. Clive
Bull, Sir William James
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Burke, E. Haviland-
Butcher, Samuel Henry
Campbell, Rt. Hon. J. H. M.
Carlile, E. Hildred
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Castlereagh, Viscount
Cave, George
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord John P. Joicey-
Cecil, Lord R. (Marylebone, E
Chamberlain, Rt Hn. J. A(Worc.
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Clive, Percy Archer
Coates, E. Feetham(Lewisham)
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Collings, Rt. Hn. J. (Birmingh'm
Courthope, G. Loyd
Craig, Charles Curtis(Antrim, S.
Craig, Capt. James (Down, E.)
Craik, Sir Henry
Dalrymple, Viscount
Dixon-Hartland, Sir Fred Dixon
Doughty, Sir George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Du Cros, Arthur Philip
Duncan, Robert(Lanark, Govan
Faber, George Denison (York)
Faber, Capt. W. V. (Hants, W.)
Fardell, Sir T. George
Fell, Arthur
Forster, Henry William
Gardner, Ernest
Gibbs, G. A. (Bristol, West)
Gooch, Henry Cubitt (Peckham)
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Gretton, John
Guinness, Walter Edward
Haddock, George B.
Hardy, Laurence (Kent, Ashf'rd

Harrison-Broadley, H. B.
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heaton, John Henniker
Helmsley, Viscount
Hill, Sir Clement
Hills, J. W.
Hogan, Michael
Hope,James Fitzalan(Sheffield)
Houston, Robert Paterson
Hunt, Rowland
Joynson-Hicks, William
Kennaway,Rt. Hn.Sir John H.
Kerry, Earl of
Keswick, William
Kimber, Sir Henry
King,Sir HenrySeymour (Hull)
Lambton, Hon. Frederick Wm.
Lee,Arthur H.(Hants,Fareham
Lockwood,Rt.Hn. Lt.-Col.A.R.
Long, Col.CharlesW.(Evesham)
Long,Rt.Hn.Walter (Dublin,S)
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Sir Francis William
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
M'Arthur, Charles
M'Calmont, Colonel James
M'Iver, Sir Lewis
Magnus, Sir Philip
Marks H. H. (Kent)
Mason, James F. (Windsor)
Meysey-Thompson, E. C.
Middlemore,John Throgmorton
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Mooney, J. J.
Morrison-Bell, Captain
Muntz, Sir Philip A.
Murphy, N. J. (Kilkenny, S.)
Nicholson, Wm. G.(Petersfield)
Nield, Herbert
Nolan, Joseph
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Kelly,James (Roscommon,N.
Parker, Sir Gilbert (Gravesend)
Parkes, Ebenezer
Pease,Herbert Pike(Darlington
Percy, Earl
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Randles, Sir John Scurrah
Ratcliff, Major R. F.
Rawlinson,JohnFrederick Peel
Remnant, James Farquharson
Roberts, S. (Sheffield,Ecclesall)
Ronaldshay, Earl of
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Salter, Arthur Clavell
Sandys, Lieut.-Col.Thos. Myles
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Sheehy, David
Sheffield,Sir BerkeleyGeorgeD
Smith, Abel H.(Hertford, East)
Smith, F.E.(Liverpool,Walton)
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Stanley, Hn. Arthur (Ormskirk
Starkey, John R.
Staveley-Hill, Henry (Staff'sh.
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Talbot,Rt.Hn.J.G.(Oxf'rdUniv
Thomson,W.Mitchell- (Lanark)
Thornton, Percy M.
Tillett, Louis John
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Walker, Col.W.H. (Lancashire)
Walrond, Hon. Lionel
Warde, Col. C. E. (Kent, Mid)
Whitbread, Howard
White, Patrick (Meath, North)
Williams, Col. R. (Dorset, W.)
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wilson,A. Stanley (York, E.R.)
Winterton, Earl
Wortley, Rt. Hn. C. B. Stuart-
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Young, Samuel
Younger, George

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Viscount Valentia.

Main Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 394 ; Noes, 148. (Division List No. 76.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Acland, Francis Dyke
Adkins, W. Ryland D.
Agar-Robartes, Hon. T. C. R.
Agnew, George William
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Alden, Percy
Allen, A. Acland(Christchurch)
Allen, Charles P. (Stroud)
Armitage, R.
Armstrong, W. C. Heaton
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Asquith,Rt.Hn.Herbert Henry
Astbury, John Meir
Atherley-Jones, L.
Baker, Sir John (Portsmouth)
Baker,JosephA.(Finsbury,E.)
Balfour, Robert (Lanark)
Baring, Godfrey(Isle of Wight)
Barker, John
Barlow, Sir John E. (Somerset)
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Barnes, G. N.
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Barry,RedmondJ.(Tyrone,N.)
Beale, W. P.
Beauchamp, E.
Beck, A. Cecil
Bell, Richard
Belloc, Hilaire Joseph Peter R.
Benn,Sir J.Williams(Devonp'rt
Benn,W.(T'w'r Hamlets,S.Geo.
Bennett, E. N.
Berridge, T. H. D.
Bethell,Sir J.H.(Essex,Romf'rd
Bethell, T. R. (Essex, Maldon)
Birrell, Rt. Hon. Augustine
Black, Arthur W.
Boland, John
Boulton, A. C. F.
Bowerman, C. W.
Brace, William
Bramsdon, T. A.
Branch, James
Brigg, John
Bright, J. A.
Brocklehurst, W. B.
Brodie, H. C.
Brooke, Stopford
Brunner,J.F.L. (Lancs., Leigh)
Brunner,RtHnSir J.T(Cheshire
Bryce, J. Annan
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Buckmaster, Stanley O.
Burns, Rt. Hon. John
Burnyeat, W. J. D.
Burt, Rt. Hon. Thomas
Buxton, Rt.Hn.Sydney Charles
Byles, William Pollard
Cameron, Robert
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Causton,Rt.Hn.RichardKnight
Cawley, Sir Frederick
Chance, Frederick William
Channing, Sir Francis Allston
Cherry, Rt. Hon. R. R.
Cleland, J. W.
Clough, William
Clynes, J. R.
Cobbold, Felix Thornley
Collins, Stephen (Lambeth)
Collins,Sir Wm.J.(S.Pancras,W
Compton-Rickett, Sir J.
Cooper, G. J.
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Corbett,C.H.(Sussex,E.Grinst'd
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Cornwall, Sir Edwin A.
Cory, Sir Clifford John
Cotton, Sir H. J. S.
Cowan, W. H.
Cox, Harold
Craig, Herbert J. (Tynemouth)
Cremer, Sir William Randal
Crooks, William
Crosfield, A. H.
Cross, Alexander
Crossley, William J.
Curran, Peter Francis
Dalmeny, Lord
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies,David(Montgomery Co.
Davies, Ellis William (Eifion)
Davies, M. Vaughan- (Cardigan
Davies, Timothy (Fulham)
Davies, W. Howell (Bristol, S.)
Dickinson,W.H.(St.Pancras, N.
Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P.
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dobson, Thomas W.
Duckworth, James
Duncan,C.(Barrow-in-Furness

Duncan, J. H. (York, Otley)
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)
Dunne, Major E. Martin (Walsall
Edwards, Clement (Denbigh)
Edwards, Enoch (Hanley)
Edwards, Sir Francis (Radnor)
Ellis, Rt. Hon. John Edward
Erskine, David C.
Essex, R. W.
Esslemont, George Birnie
Evans, Sir Samuel T.
Everett, R. Lacey
Faber, G. H. (Boston)
Fenwick, Charles
Ferens, T. R.
Ferguson, R. C. Munro
Fetherstonhaugh, Godfrey
Ffrench, Peter
Fiennes, Hon. Eustace
Findlay, Alexander
Foster, Rt. Hon. Sir Walter
Freeman-Thomas, Freeman
Fuller, John Michael F.
Fullerton, Hugh
Furness, Sir Christopher
Gibb, James (Harrow)
Gill, A. H.
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert John
Glen-Coats, Sir T. (Renfrew, W.
Glendinning, R. G.
Glover, Thomas
Gooch, George Peabody (Bath)
Gordon, J.
Grant, Corrie
Greenwood, G. (Peterborough)
Greenwood, Hamar (York)
Grey, Rt. Hon. Sir Edward
Griffith, Ellis J.
Grove, Archibald
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Gulland, John W.
Gurdon, Rt. Hn. Sir W. Brampton
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Hall, Frederick
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Lewis
Hardie, J. Keir (Merthyr Tydvil)
Hardy, George A. (Suffolk)
Harmsworth, Cecil B. (Worc'r)
Harmsworth, R. L. (Caithn'ss-sh
Hart-Davies, T.
Harvey, A. G. C. (Rochdale)
Harvey, W. E. (Derbyshire, N. E.
Harwood, George
Haslam, James (Derbyshire)
Haslam, Lewis (Monmouth)
Haworth, Arthur A.
Hazel, Dr. A. E.
Hedges, A. Paget
Helme, Norval Watson
Hemmerde, Edward George
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Henderson, J. M. (Aberdeen, W.)
Henry, Charles S.
Herbert, Col. Sir Ivor (Mon., S.)
Herbert, T. Arnold (Wycombe)
Higham, John Sharp
Hobart, Sir Robert
Hobhouse, Charles E. H.
Hodge, John
Holland, Sir William Henry
Holt, Richard Durning
Hooper, A. G.
Hope, John Deans (Fife, West
Hope, W. Bateman (Somerset, N
Horniman, Emslie John
Horridge, Thomas Gardner
Howard, Hon. Geoffrey
Hudson, Walter
Hutton, Alfred Eddison
Hyde, Clarendon
Illingworth, Percy H.
Isaacs, Rufus Daniel
Jackson, R. S.
Jacoby, Sir James Alfred
Jardine, Sir J.
Jenkins, J.
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Johnson, W. (Nuneaton)
Jones, Sir D. Brynmor (Swansea
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Jowett, F. W.
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kekewich, Sir George
Kelley, George D.
Kincaid-Smith, Captain
King, Alfred John (Knutsford)
Laidlaw, Robert
Lamb, Edmund G. (Leominster
Lamb, Ernest H. (Rochester)
Lambert, George
Lamont, Norman
Langley, Batty
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese, Sir Joseph F. (Accrington
Lehmann, R. C.
Lever, A. Levy (Essex, Harwich
Lever, W. H. (Cheshire, Wirral)
Levy, Sir Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, Rt. Hon. David
Lough, Rt. Hon. Thomas
Lupton, Arnold
Luttrell, Hugh Fownes
Lyell, Charles Henry
Lynch, H. B.
Macdonald, J. R. (Leicester)
Macdonald, J. M. (Falkirk B'ghs
Mackarness, Frederic C.
Maclean, Donald
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
Macpherson, J. T.
MacVeagh, Jeremiah (Down, S.
M'Callum, John M.
M'Crae, George
M'Kenna, Rt. Hon. Reginald
M'Laren, Sir C. B. (Leicester)
M'Laren, H. D. (Stafford, W.)
M'Micking, Major G.
Maddison, Frederick
Mallet, Charles E.
Manfield, Harry (Northants)
Mansfield, H. Rendall (Lincoln)
Markham, Arthur Basil
Marks, G. Croydon (Launceston)
Marnham, F. J.
Mason, A. E. W. (Coventry)
Massie, J.
Menzies, Walter
Micklem, Nathaniel
Middlebrook, William
Molteno, Percy Alport
Mond, A.
Money, L. G. Chiozza
Montagu, E. S.
Montgomery, H. G.
Morgan, G. Hay (Cornwall)
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Morrell, Philip
Morse, L. L.
Morton, Alpheus Cleophas
Murray, Capt. Hn. A. C. (Kincard.
Murray, James (Aberdeen, E.)
Myer, Horatio
Napier, T. B.
Newnes, F. (Notts, Bassetlaw)
Newnes, Sir George (Swansea)
Nicholls, George
Nicholson, Charles N. (Doncast'r
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nussey, Thomas Willans
Nuttall, Harry
O'Donnell, C. J. (Walworth)
O'Grady, J.
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Parker, James (Halifax)
Partington, Oswald
Paulton, James Mellor
Pearce, Robert (Staffs, Leek)
Pearce, William (Limehouse)
Pearson, W. H. M. (Suffolk, Eye)
Perks, Robert William
Philipps, Col. Ivor (S'thampton)
Philipps, J. Wynford (Pembroke
Philipps, Owen C. (Pembroke
Pickersgill, Edward Hare
Pirie, Duncan V.
Pollard, Dr.
Price, Robert John (Norfolk, E.)
Priestley, Arthur (Grantham)
Priestley, W. E. B. (Bradford, E.)
Pullar, Sir Robert
Radford, G. H.
Raphael, Herbert H.
Rea, Russell (Gloucester)
Rea, Walter Russell (Scarboro'
Rees, J. D.
Rendall, Athelstan
Richards, Thomas (W. Monm'th
Richards, T. F. (Wolverh'mpt'n
Richardson, A.
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roberts, Charles H. (Lincoln)
Roberts, G. H. (Norwich)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robertson, Sir G. Scott (Bradf'rd
Robertson, J. M. (Tyneside)
Robinson, S.
Robson, Sir William Snowdon
Roe, Sir Thomas
Rogers, F. E. Newman
Rose, Charles Day
Rowlands, J.
Runciman, Rt. Hon. Walter
Russell, T. W.
Rutherford, V. H. (Brentford)
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Schwann, C. Duncan (Hyde)
Schwann, Sir C. E. (Manchester)
Scott, A. H. (Ashton under Lyne
Sears, J. E.
Seaverns, J. H.
Seddon, J.
Seely, Colonel
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Silcock, Thomas Ball

Simon, John Allsebrook
Sinclair, Rt. Hon. John
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smeaton, Donald Mackenzie
Snowden, P.
Soares, Ernest J.
Spicer, Sir Albert
Stanger, H. Y.
Stanley, Albert (Staffs, N.W.)
Stanley, Hn. A.Lyulph(Chesh.)
Steadman, W. C.
Stewart, Halley (Greenock)
Stewart-Smith, D. (Kendal)
Strachey, Sir Edward
Straus, B. S. (Mile End)
Stuart, James (Sunderland)
Summerbell, T.
Sutherland, J. E.
Taylor, Austin (East Toxteth
Taylor, John W. (Durham)
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Tennant, Sir Edward(Salisbury
Tennant, H. J. (Berwickshire)
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.)
Thomas, Sir A. (Glamorgan, E.
Thomas,David Alfred (Merthyr
Thomasson, Franklin
Thompson,J.W. H (Somerset,E
Thorne, William
Tomkinson, James
Torrance, Sir A. M.
Toulmin, George
Ure, Alexander
Verney, F. W.
Villiers, Ernest Amherst
Vivian, Henry
Wadsworth, J.
Walker, H. De R. (Leicester)
Walsh, Stephen
Walters, John Tudor
Walton, Joseph
Ward, John (Stoke-upon-Trent
Ward,W.Dudley(Southampton
Wardle, George J.
Waring, Walter
Wason,Rt.Hn.E.(Clackmannan
Wason,John Cathcart (Orkney)
Waterlow, D. S.
Watt, Henry A.
Wedgwood, Josiah C.
Weir, James Galloway
White, Sir George (Norfolk)
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whitehead, Rowland
Whitley, John Henry (Halifax)
Whittaker, Sir Thomas Palmer
Wiles, Thomas
Williams, J. (Glamorgan)
Williams,Llewelyn (Carmarth'n
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Williamson, A.
Wills, Arthur Walters
Wilson, Hon. G. G. (Hull, W.)
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W. R.)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid)
Wilson, J. H. (Middlesbrough)
Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh. N.
Wilson, P. W. (St. Pancras, S.)
Wilson, T. W. (Westhoughton)
Winfrey, R.
Wodehouse, Lord
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Whiteley and Mr. J. A. Pease.

NOES.

Anson, Sir William Reynell
Anstruther-Gray, Major
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster,Rt.Hn Hugh O.
Ashley, W. W.
Aubrey-Fletcher,Rt.Hn. Sir H.
Balcarres, Lord
Baldwin, Stanley
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Baring,Capt.Hn.G (Winchester
Barnard, E. B.
Beach,Hn.Michael Hugh Hicks
Beckett, Hon. Gervase
Bertram, Julius
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bottomley, Horatio
Bowles, G. Stewart
Bridgeman, W. Clive
Bull, Sir William James
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Burke, E. Haviland-
Butcher, Samuel Henry
Campbell, Rt. Hon. J. H. M.
Carlile, E. Hildred
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Castlereagh, Viscount
Cave, George
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord John P. Joicey-
Cecil, Lord R. (Marylebone, E.)
Chamberlain,Rt.Hn.J.A.(Worc
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Clive, Percy Archer
Coates, E. Feetham (Lewisham
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Collings,Rt.Hn.J. (Birmingh'm
Courthope, G. Loyd
Craig,Charles Curtis (Antrim,S.
Craig,Captain James(Down,E.)
Craik, Sir Henry
Dalrymple, Viscount
Dixon-Hartland,Sir FredDixon
Doughty, Sir George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Du Cros, Arthur Philip
Duncan,Robert (Lanark,Govan
Faber, George Denison (York)
Faber, Capt. W. V. (Hants, W.)
Fardell, Sir T. George
Fell, Arthur
Forster, Henry William
Gardner, Ernest
Gibbs, G. A. (Bristol, West)
Gooch,Henry Cubitt(Peckham)
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Gretton, John
Guinness, Walter Edward
Haddock, George B.
Hardy,Laurence (Kent,Ashford
Harrison-Broadley, H. B.
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heaton, John Henniker
Helmsley, Viscount
Hill, Sir Clement
Hills, J. W.
Hogan, Michael
Hope,James Fitzalan (Sheffield
Houston, Robert Paterson
Hunt, Rowland
Idris, T. H. W.
Joynson-Hicks, William
Kennaway,Rt. Hn. Sir John H.
Kerry, Earl of
Keswick, William
Kimber, Sir Henry
King,Sir Henry Seymour(Hull)
Lambton, Hon. Frederick Wm.
Lee,Arthur H.(Hants,Fareham
Lockwood,Rt.Hn. Lt.-Col.A.R.
Long,Col.Charles W. (Evesham
Long,Rt.Hn. Walter (Dublin,S.
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Sir Francis William
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
M'Arthur, Charles
M'Calmont, Colonel James
M'Iver, Sir Lewis
Magnus, Sir Philip
Marks, H. H. (Kent)
Mason, James F. (Windsor)
Meysey-Thompson, E. C.
Middlemore,John Throgmort'n
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Mooney, J. J.
Morrison-Bell, Captain
Muntz, Sir Philip A.
Murphy, N. J. (Kilkenny, S.)
Nicholson,Wm. G. (Petersfield)
Nield, Herbert
Nolan, Joseph
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Kelly,James (Roscommon,N
Parker,Sir Gilbert (Gravesend)
Parkes, Ebenezer
Pease,Herbert Pike(Darlington
Percy, Earl
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Randles, Sir John Scurrah
Ratcliff, Major R. F.
Rawlinson,John Frederick Peel
Remnant, James Farquharson
Roberts, S. (Sheffield, Ecclesall)
Ronaldshay, Earl of
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Salter, Arthur Clavell
Sandys, Lieut.-Col. Thos. Myles
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Scott, Sir S. (Marylebone, W.)
Sheffield,Sir Berkeley GeorgeD.
Smith,Abel H. (Hertford, East)
Smith,F.E. (Liverpool,Walton)
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Stanley,Hn. Arthur (Ormskirk)
Starkey, John R.
Staveley-Hill, Henry (Staff'sh.)
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)

Talbot, Rt. Hn. J. G. (Oxf'd Univ
Thomson, W. Mitchell- (Lanark)
Thornton, Percy M.
Tillett, Louis John
Tuke, Sir John Batty
Walker, Col. W. H. (Lancashire)
Walrond, Hon. Lionel
Warde, Col. C. E. (Kent, Mid)
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Whitbread, Howard
White, Patrick (Meath, North)
Williams, Col. R. (Dorset, W.)
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E.R.)
Winterton, Earl
Wortley, Rt. Hn. C. B. Stuart-
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Young, Samuel
Younger, George

Tellers for the Noes—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Viscount Valentia.

Bill read a second time.

Bill committed to a Committee of the whole House for Monday next.—(*Mr. Asquith.*)

MARRIED WOMEN'S PROPERTY BILL.

Read a second time, and committed to a Standing Committee.

MONUMENT TO SIR HENRY CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN.

Committee to consider an humble Address to be presented to His Majesty praying that His Majesty will give directions that a Monument be erected at the public charge in the Collegiate Church of St. Peter's, Westminster, to the memory of the Right Hon. Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman (King's Recommendation signified), upon Monday, 18th May.—(*Mr. Asquith.*)

And, it being after half-past Eleven of the clock on Monday evening, Mr. Speaker adjourned the House without Question put, pursuant to the Standing Order.

Adjourned at ten minutes after Twelve o'clock.

[APPENDICES.

APPENDIX I.

PUBLIC BILLS

DEALT WITH IN VOLUME CLXXXVII.

Those marked thus * are Government Bills. The figures in parentheses in the last column refer to the page in this volume. "[H.L.]" following title indicates that the Bill originated in the House of Lords.

(A.) House of Lords.

Title of Bill.	Brought in by	Progress.
*Army Annual	*Earl of Portsmouth*	Read 2^a 31st March (247) Committee } 1st April (446) Report } Read 3^a and passed 6th April (886) Royal Assent 14th April (961)
*Companies (Consolidation) [H.L.]	*Earl Granard*	Read 1^a 1st April (447)
*County Courts [H.L.]	*Lord Loreburn*	Read 2^a 2nd April (637)
Elementary Education (England & Wales) [H.L.]	*Bishop of St. Asaph*	Second Reading (adjourned) 30th March (3)
Moveable Dwellings [H.L.]	*Lord Clifford of Chudleigh*	Read 2^a 1st April (447)
Municipal Representation [H.L.]	*Lord Courtney of Penwith*	Read 3^a and passed 2nd April (636)
*Patents and Designs [H.L.]	*Earl of Granard*	Read 3^a and passed 1st April (466)
*Post Office Consolidation [H.L.]	*Earl of Granard*	Read 2^a 2nd April (636)
*Small Holdings & Allotments (Scotland) [H.L.]	*Earl Carrington*	Committee 2nd April (635)
Sunday Closing (Shops) [H.L.]	*Lord Avebury*	Report 2nd April (635)

(B.) House of Commons.

Title of Bill.	Brought in by	Progress.
*Army Annual	*Mr. Haldane*	Royal Assent 14th April (1001)
Ballot Act (1872) Amendment (No. 2)	*Mr. Dunn*	Second Reading (adjourned, 3rd April (879)
Bankruptcy (Scotland)	*Mr. Cleland*	Read 1° 2nd April (707)
*Children	*Mr. H. Samuel*	Read 2° 1st April (561)
Coroners' Inquests	*Mr. Higham*	Read 2° 3rd April (861)
*Costs in Criminal Cases	*Sir S. Evans*	Read 2° 1st April (557)
Education (Consolidation and Amendment)	*Mr. Wedgwood*	Read 1° 30th April (1417)
Engines and Boilers (Persons in Charge (No. 2)	*Mr. W. E. Harvey*	Read 1° 28th April (1106)
Factory and Workshop Act (1901) Amendment	*Mr. Jowett*	Read 1° 30th April (1418)
Ferries (Ireland)	*Mr. Gwynn*	Read 2° 1st April (627)
Fire Inquests	*Sir H. Cotton*	Read 1° 31st March (331)
Home Work	*Mr. Barnes*	Read 1° 28th April (1106)
Industrial and Provident Societies Amendment	*Mr. Dickinson*	Read 1° 2nd April (707)
*Irish Universities	*Mr. Birrell*	Read 1° 31st March (331)
*Licensing	*Mr. Asquith*	Second Reading 28th Apr. (1107) " 29th " (1270) " 30th " (1418) " 4th May (1676)
Married Women's Property	*Mr. Hicks Beach*	Read 2° 4th May (1797)
Municipal Representation [H.L.]	*Mr. J. Robertson*	Read 1° 4th May (1674)
New-Born Children (Protection)	*Lord R. Cecil*	Read 1° 28th April (1106)
Poor Law (Ireland)	*Captain Craig*	Second Reading defeated 3rd April (830)
*Port of London	*Mr. Lloyd-George*	Read 1° 2nd April (707)

Title of Bill.	Brought in by	Progress.
*Prosecution of Offences (Amendment)	*Sir W. Robson*	Committee 1st April (539)
Public Health Acts Amendment (Markets)	*Mr. Rendall*	Read 1° 28th April (1106)
*Public Health (Markets in Rural Districts)	*Mr. J. Burns*	Read 1° 2nd April (707)
Shops	*Sir C. Dilke*	Read 2° 1st May (1534)
Summary Jurisdiction (Ireland)	*Marquess of Hamilton*	Read 2° 28th April (1224)
Trade Disputes	*Mr. Cleland*	Read 1° 2nd April (707)
Vivisection (Abolition)	*Mr. Hodge*	Read 1° 2nd April (707)
Whaling Stations	*Mr. J. C. Wason*	Read 1° 29th April (1267)
Workmen's Eviction (Trade Disputes)	*Mr. Walsh*	Read 1° 4th May (1675)

APPENDIX II.

HOUSE OF COMMONS, SESSION 1908.

List of Rules, Orders, &c., which have been presented during the Session, and are required by Statute to lie for an appointed number of Days upon the Table of the House.

[In Continuation of List given in previous Volume.]

Title of Paper.	Date from which the Period runs.	Period to lie upon the Table.
Universities (Scotland) Act, 1889 (Ordinance),—Copy of University Court Ordinance No. XXIV. (Aberdeen, No. 2) (Regulations for Degrees in Arts) [52 and 53 Vic., c. 55, s. 20]	2 April	12 weeks
Universities (Scotland) Act, 1889 (Ordinance),—Copy of University Court Ordinance No. XXV. (Aberdeen, No. 3) (Regulations as to Bursaries, &c.) [52 and 53 Vic., c. 55, s. 20]	2 April	12 weeks
Criminal Appeal Rules,—Copy of Additional Criminal Appeal Rule, 1908 [7 Edw. VII., c. 23, s. 18]	2 April	30 sitting days
Irish Land Commission (Rules),—Copy of Rules, dated 26th March 1908, supplemental to and amending the Rules dated the 16th March 1897, 19th March 1900, 17th May 1901, 14th March 1902, and (Provisional Rules) 4th December 1903 [3 Edw. VII., c. 37, s. 92]	6 April	40 sitting days
Merchant Shipping (Mercantile Marine Fund) Act, 1898,—Copy of Draft Order in Council altering the Exemptions in the Second Schedule to the Act by adding thereto Sailing Yachts not registered in the British Islands which come into territorial waters adjacent to the United Kingdom, with the sole object of taking part in Yacht Racing [61 and 62] Vic., c. 44, s. 5 (3)]	14 April	30 days
Education (Scotland),—Copy of Regulations for the Preliminary Education, Training, and Certification of Teachers for various Grades of Schools, 1908 [35 and 36 Vic., c. 62, s. 67]	14 April	One month
Sheriff Courts (Scotland) Act, 1907,—Copy of Act of Sederunt anent Proceedure in Appeals, under Sections 5 and 30 of the Sheriff Courts (Scotland) Act, 1907 [7 Edw. VII., c. 51, s. 40]	28 April	36 days
Sheriff Courts (Scotland) Act, 1907,—Copy of Act of Sederunt regulating the Fees of Agents and others in the Sheriff Court [7 Edw. VII., c. 51, s. 40]	28 April	36 days
Shop Hours Act, 1904,—Copy of Order made by the Municipal Council of the City of Dublin, and confirmed by the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, fixing the Hours for Closing certain classes of Shops within the City [4 Edw. VII., c. 31, s. 3 (3)]	28 April	40 days
Shop Hours Act, 1904,—Copy of Order made by the Council of the County Borough of Croydon, and confirmed by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, fixing the Hours of Closing for certain classes of Shops within a certain part of the Borough [4 Edw. VII., c. 31, s. 3 (3)]	April 29	40 days

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PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

[AUTHORISED EDITION].

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Where in the Index * is added with Reading of a Bill, or a Vote in Committee of Supply, it indicates that no Debate took place on that stage of the Bill, or on that Vote.

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